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THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.

WE have a baby in our family. Not that a baby is an unusual occurrence in our part of the country; indeed, it is quite common, but I mention the fact because all my life, since I have been old enough to turn a serious attention to such matters, I have always said and written much as to the care and treatment of infants. Their tricks and manners could have no possible terror for me, for I had settled the matter long ago.

When, therefore, I found myself in undisputed possession of a healthy boy, I determined that, right in my own home, there should be a remarkable case of the happy union of precept and example. No erratic sleepings and awakenings should my baby know, nor irregularities of diet. All his uprisings, his downlyings, and his inputtings should be according to Medean and Persian rule.

But, strange as it may seem, even the maternal eye, which is considered the most discerning one that can be bent upon a child, failed to notice at a glance the great superiority in this baby's mental endowments and the consequent need of greater skill and latitude in government. Baby's characteristics, however, were of too positive a nature to be long hidden. Thus, almost from the beginning, a change was necessitated from the course I have always recommended and still do recommend for less gifted children.

I had determined to keep but one servant, and, indeed, in a small flat there is scarcely room for more. Of course, baby

would add one to the family, but to offset this we could have a woman come in to do the laundry-work and extra cleaning, which would compensate for any additional service that such a well-behaved child could possibly require. Bridget could go on with her work as usual and, during my absence, when I had gone marketing, calling, or to church, she could look in from time to time. Of course, I would adapt my trips to baby's habits.

For awhile everything worked well. As soon as my nurse had gone, I made a practice of rising long enough before the breakfast hour to give baby his bath and feed him. At the close of these ceremonies, he was so drowsy that he was willing to sleep quietly and sweetly in his crib while we took our morning meal, served as usual by Bridget. From where I sat at the table, I could, by leaning back a little, see the regular rising and falling of the little white blanket that baby etiquette requires shall envelop the chest and head of a sleeping infant.

"Now, Jack," I said, "you see how little trouble a baby really is—if you only know how to manage him."

"Do you think he will always behave as well as this, Jill?" asked Jack.

"Certainly," said I, adding with much originality, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old—"

"He will keep on training," interrupted Jack.

I tried to look severe, but smiled in-

stead. Jack *must* have his little joke. One morning I washed and fed the baby as usual, but, contrary to custom, his ablutions and subsequent meal did not have a somnific effect. Baby was wide awake, and when I laid him in his crib he grew very red and fretty, and looked at me as if to say that I was mistaken if I supposed that he intended to sleep; that a Turkish bath and a fourteen-course dinner *might* do it, but certainly no such result could be accomplished by the substitutes that had been furnished him.

The more I patted and soothed and talked the more he shrieked his intentions not to go to sleep if he could help it. This was most unusual, but I was prepared for it. I covered him in the customary way and went into the dining-room, where Jack was reading the morning paper, awaiting me. He looked up as I entered.

"What seems to be the trouble?" he asked.

"Oh! nothing of any consequence; simply that baby does not want to go to sleep, and I am determined that he shall, as—as it is his usual time." I said this as firmly as I could, for the shrieks had become louder, and were changing to a steady roar. "He will grow quiet in a minute, as soon as he sees that I will not yield," I continued, quoting from one of my own articles.

As I seated myself at the table, a smothered sound came from the other room—half choke and half gasp. Jack sprang to his feet and I fairly flew to the crib. What could be the matter? Baby had pulled his blanket over his head and there, with his two fists knotted in it, high above his head, was making frantic but ineffectual efforts to emerge. I took the blanket entirely off, turned the baby a little, according to my own recommendations to others, and we went back to breakfast, although I was so weak from my fright that I could scarcely walk.

We seated ourselves and Bridget appeared with the oatmeal.

"You need not serve the breakfast in courses this morning," I said, and then, as she stood stupidly looking at me, "put it all on at once; the baby is—not very well."

I gulped a little as I said this, for I knew that never was he more vigorous nor healthy than at this moment when his piercing yells were rending the air of our hitherto well-conducted little home. We tried to eat, but it was not a success. While I was making my most heroic efforts to swallow a small section of an orange, I glanced at Jack to see how he was enduring the terrific vocalizations of the baby. Jack was looking straight at me.

"Suppose we bring the baby out here, Jill," said he; "I can hold him and eat I know I can. See, there is plenty of room," glancing down at the space that would have been his lap if he had worn a dress. I considered an instant—it would not do to yield.

"No, Jack," I said, "if we are ever again to enjoy a quiet meal we must be firm now."

Just then Bridget stuck her head in the door. "Shall I mind him while yez ate yer breakfast, mum?"

"No, Bridget," I said, permitting myself in my misery a Shakespearean play upon words, "never mind, he must learn to mind me."

Jack sat still for a minute longer, during which the yells continued.

"Very well, I'm going to get him if you won't," said he, and he marched into our sleeping-room and soon reappeared with the cause of all this turmoil, rosy and smiling, in his arms. Not a tear had coursed over our son's countenance. His howls were purely those of rage, and when the irritating cause was removed, behold him as pink and lovable as ever. In any other baby this would have been temper, but in our baby it plainly showed strength

of mind and force of character. I held him in my arms during breakfast, and while we were wondering at his surprising growth and development he fell asleep.

Jack bought a high-chair that day and I fitted to it a long cushion, extending entirely over the back and seat, and baby lies in it at dinner-time, although he usually sleeps during our breakfast, according to his custom before the memorable contest at which he came off victorious.

One day, not long after, sir baby, in a language peculiar to himself, demanded a between-meal. Now, I am particularly opposed to an indulgence of this sort. So, as it was the baby's nap-time, I calmly laid him down, disregarding his call for food. How he roared and tumbled! but again I hardened my heart and, seeing the gyrations of the fat legs, pondered the scriptural assurance that from undue eating "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." What athletic feats would not this, my son, perform if over-indulged in food! But baby came out ahead again this time. I was afraid that if allowed to "wrastle" he would do himself an internal injury, even greater than would be caused by an out-of-season repast.

Then, too, I quite miscalculated as to the depth and soundness of his slumbers. One afternoon I left him sleeping at five o'clock, and telling Bridget to look in occasionally, I went down-town to do some shopping and to meet Jack and return with him in time for our six o'clock dinner. Baby always slept until seven. When we entered our little abode, picture our amazement to see Bridget marching up and down with Jack, Jr., on her arm.

"Oi'm kilt wid grief, mum, and the dinner not got; but the baby'll not lit me put him down at all—at all," said she.

After that, my husband's sister came over frequently in the afternoon and gave me a breathing space, for, though the

baby is generally quiet, I cannot run the risk of depriving us of dinner.

I have been feeling rather hard toward my sister-in-law ever since the day when I was commenting on the baby's beauty, and she laughed and said his face looked like a "magenta knot," and that his nose needed "pinching up." Magenta, indeed! You should see that baby's complexion. The loveliest, softest glow of health! And as for his nose, what would she have, pray? A huge excrescence disfiguring his darling little face and eclipsing his other features? However, I am gradually forgiving and forgetting that cruel speech, for my sister-in-law is really very fond of the baby, and is helping me devise means for his entertainment, showing that she has a proper appreciation of his mental activity.

She had a carpenter put casters on a small, low, dry-goods box, and then she padded the bottom and sides, so that I can put the baby in there with his playthings while I am at work or busy. He plays happily in it by the hour; for no matter how often he throws his rubber ring and rattle, he can reach them again for himself. When I have company and Bridget is busy, I draw the box into the parlor.

We are progressing very nicely now. The baby is usually amenable to home-rule, and eats and sleeps and has his being about as we have trained him to do, and the daily rut is seldom crossed by a furrow. But, sometimes, he declares himself averse to all law and rule—a veritable nihilist of the most pronounced type—and then we humor him. We rock him, dance him, give him the bric-a-brac to play with, and even walk the floor with him. At these times there seems to be no rule but the rule of misrule.

Although I have always decried the habit of holding forth about one's own children, as is the custom of some mothers, and have deplored the stupidity of relating sayings and doings that were not in the least wonderful, I state the afore-men-

tioned facts without hesitancy, knowing that everybody will be glad to hear about my baby because he is such an interesting child.

Under ordinary circumstances, every erratic tendency should be suppressed,

but I was obliged to make my case the exception that is said to be so necessary to prove the rule, for my baby is a most remarkable one and not at all like others.

AUGUSTA SALISBURY PRESCOTT.

KING SCANDAL.

TWO gentlemen sit before a cheerful wood fire enjoying the dancing blaze and quiet comfort of congenial companionship. A study in themselves in the strongly marked characteristics of their faces, in the perfect health and fine physique of the younger, and the dignified bearing that a long life of respect for himself and regard for others had stamped upon the elder man. Though entirely unlike in feature and individuality, there were lines in both faces that indicated strongly a reserve of will which could be drawn upon should circumstances demand.

Now, as in the past, good fellowship reigned supreme, despite the difference in age, and the keenest observer would have failed to detect any indication that Friendship on its throne could be threatened by that nihilistic leveler, Self-will. How nearly we tread to Destiny all unknowing, and to how many of us have come unawares the turning-point in some great road of our life and vanished, almost before we knew we had encountered it, leaving us stumbling in an unknown place, to adapt ourselves to our new and surprising surroundings as best we may. Presently,

over the clear and sunny horizon of their conversation, arose a cloud, "small as a man's hand," 'tis true, but fruitful with large consequences.

"Cedric," spoke the elder man, and his voice was one which, if heard in a crowd, would have drawn attention and cause one to glance up quickly to see what manner of man this was, with a voice deep and ringing yet withal sweet and low, with so perfect an accentuation that it would have been termed pedantic but for its spontaneity.

"At your service, uncle," answered the young man addressed, and there was a startling similarity in the voices with not even the distinction which age might show, for that of the elder was peculiar in a buoyancy of tone which one would look for in the younger man, but the absence of which was marked as he spoke.

The elder gentleman took from the table two curiously shaped keys and handed them to his nephew, saying: "Will you be kind enough to open that door?" pointing to what appeared to be a panel of carved oak inserted in the high wainscot, "and you will find a small wrought-iron box which you will please hand to me."

How strange it sounded—the Saxon Cedric engrafted upon an individual exponent of this nineteenth-century civilization, and yet, as he who bore this name arose, he showed his lineage and looked no unfit representative of the old knight, his ancestor, who rendered up his life for his royal master, Edward the Confessor. Through the gathering twilight of an autumn afternoon his tawny hair and mustache gleamed brightly in the firelight, and his broad shoulders and well-knit frame corresponded well with an underlying look of determined endurance in his clear, blue eyes.

Crossing the room with an easy grace, he applied the larger key of the two to the craftily concealed lock of the panel indicated. It slid back into the wall, disclosing a recess in which had been deposited an iron box. Cedric, placing this box in his uncle's hands, leaned against the high back of the chair in which sat the elder gentleman and awaited his next words.

The smaller key was inserted in the lock, the lid lifted, and a roll of paper, tied with red tape, was drawn forth by an unsteady hand. Musingly Mr. Huntingdon gazed upon it, and, finally, looking up, spoke, a sigh breaking the fine harmony of his voice.

"Cedric, this is my will, and in it you are named my heir, on one condition only, and to that I believe you will not find it hard to accede. You have always been to me as a son, and I have ever regarded you as he who will worthily rule my house and fortune when I have passed away. I do not want to die, few of us do who are truly successful, I think, but of late—of late, I have caught from afar the stealthy footsteps of one who comes inevitably—one who gathers us all into his storehouse, there to be laid aside until the Great Thresher shall separate the grain from the chaff, storing the former for future usefulness and casting the latter to the winds to be lost apparently forever. Katharine Howard, my ward, would,

but for me, be poor and friendless, and I would see her happily provided for. Am I wrong in believing that you love her, that you will take her joyfully to be your wife, and cherish her so tenderly that she will find in your love more than a recompense for the loss of the protector and father she has known in me?"

The young man's head had sunk upon his hands as they rested on the quaintly covered chair, and for a space Silence stood with finger on her lip in waiting, Cedric endeavoring to master his feelings, and his uncle awaiting his reply. At length, raising his head, he placed both hands on his uncle's white hair, and thus he gave his answer :

"My friend and father! the best in all this world that God has given me, from the utmost depths of my heart I thank you, and God do so to me as I do with the life you have placed in my hands and the power that comes to me from you with your gift."

A slender hand was raised, and, enfolding in its nervous grasp that of Cedric, Mr. Huntingdon drew it gently toward him, resting his head against it with an almost womanly gesture. At length his absent thoughts returned to him from heaven and earth like swallows winging to their home at evening, and, raising his head, he spoke in a voice of pathos:

"Go now, Cedric; Katharine awaits you and is not entirely unprepared, and the blessing of the great and good God rest upon you both."

With bowed head and reverent step Cedric softly withdrew, as from an holy place.

Truly, it needs no altar to consecrate a spot where good and noble deeds have been performed, and where the God-like portion of a man has lighted up the temple of his being with the brilliant lamps of Truth and Love.

Far away from hum of city and rush of business, sped Cedric the next day; out into the fragrant woods, glowing and

beaming in their autumnal dress of reds and yellows, greens and russet-browns; rushing through them at the back of the mighty geni steam, which, once liberated, has grown to gigantic proportions, filling the whole wide world, but with its huge strength controlled by that huger power, invisible but all-potent, molding the broad world like clay in a potter's hand—the will of man. On he sped, where hills roll up after hills, gradually unfolding their vast scrolls, whereon may be read the fiery message of primeval earth; across broad rivers, those flowing arteries of the land, and up into the fir-clad regions of the New Hampshire hills. His iron steed drew breath with a shriek, and shaking itself until its strong bones clanked again, stopped, with an all-pervading shiver, at a small, wayside station.

Cedric alighted, and stood watching the train as it grew smaller and smaller in the distance, and finally vanished altogether.

Then the consciousness of perfect quietude fell upon him with a great force, and he longed to shout aloud, that he might break the spell. The station was closed, no house in sight, no living being to be seen, and the only sound that broke the complete silence was the distant tinkle of a cow-bell struck in the minor key. The afternoon shadows were lying long on the dying grass, and a threatening cloud in the west, like an inky cloak pierced through with pins of fiery lightning, warned him that he should seek a shelter quickly, lest it should descend and envelop him in its bewildering folds.

In view of this unmistakable warning he no longer hesitated, but struck off into the fields, to a footpath with which he appeared to be familiar; and his stalwart figure, with its easy, swinging gait, was lost in the deepening gloom of a sombre forest, into which the small path plunged, and was swallowed up by the hungry shadows.

Darker and darker grew the sky, and

more and more deadly in their intent became the lightnings. Crickets, that had commenced their *Angelus*, felt the sinister influence in the air, stopped their chirping one by one, and crawled away to find shelter under leaves and stones from the coming storm; birds wheeled wildly like spirits of the air, as they truly are—air, fashioned into form, by a dainty outline of delicate plumes—and, darting here and there, sought each their breezy homes, swinging twixt heaven and earth on the top of some tall tree. Wild rabbits came out of their burrows, and sitting on their haunches, gazed with round-eyed timidity at the lowering sky and threatened earth, and turned again to their homes, with a queer little shake of their downy tails; and a water-snake in the bank of the brook thrust forth his head with its shiny eyes and delicate, forked tongue, but drew it back again, all unheeding of the frog intended for his evening meal. Gradually each living creature found its home, and there fell, as a veil over all nature, the intense quietude of expectancy. Not in the crash of the thunder or the flash of the lightning, but in the significant and perfect silence did the still small voice speak to man. "He comes, the king!" the earth breathed forth, and the leaves faintly shivered to each other, "he comes," as down through the mountain gorge rushed the strong southwest wind. He caught them up—the leaves—and tossed them here and there with heedless strength, whirling them around in a dizzy dance, until with a laugh he dropped them into out-of-the-way corners and under hedges, there to lie, until, sodden with rain and bleached and dim, they should be ground to powder as the plaything of other winds. The wind had it all his own way for a time, stripping the great trees of their leafy dress, and leaving the bare limbs writhing in torture, each small twig stretching to heaven, like skeleton hands held up in mute supplication; and he struck with powerful fingers the tall pine trees, turning

them into vast æolian harps with ringing chords.

Then grew the darkness more overshadowing, and broke upon the earth in sheets of rain, thundering from the skies like the fall of some great cascade. Sweeping all before it, it turned the brook into a foamy water-course, lashed it into a misty whirlpool, and sweeping out of his hole the water-snake, carried him down, helplessly writhing.

The lightnings flashed and darted across the dusky clouds, and heaven's artillery thundered athwart the sky on unseen battle-grounds.

Gigantic battles of the sky are these, where mighty spirits, hid from mortal eyes by intervening clouds, come face to face, and power to power, and wage Titanic warfare.

The brook ran foaming down, its limits all too narrow for its mad career, bowing low the reeds, and wrenching off, in its angry strength, great pieces of the grassy bank.

So crashes through all restraint and natural boundaries the primitive man within each one of us, when some great storm of circumstance has swept away the barriers set by self-restraint and etiquette.

God help us when that times comes! 'tis alone the divine spark implanted in us at our birth, that can then exercise a saving influence, and even its effect is great or small, in direct proportion as it has been neglected or cultivated.

The brook flew onward in its headlong course, straight in the track taken by Cedric, and, like him, was lost in the gloom of the forest, where its angry roar sank into a more subdued tone; and so it whirled along a mile or more, when, describing a sharp curve, it shot past a small red house set down in a meadow.

Behind the house a frowning precipice rose threateningly in the air, its great, scarred face, seamed and marked from the fiery furnace of the inner world. Long vines had found a foothold in the crevices,

and waved their phantom-like trails in the wind—the flags of a forlorn hope; and a few stunted trees, with naked and broken branches, had died in dumb despair, but still clung to the rock with the rigid strength of a death-grip.

At the door of the house stood an old woman gazing out on the storm through the fast-gathering darkness, and all unmindful of the raging elements. As she looked, one of the trees above moved slowly from its place. Gradually its clasp had loosened by wind and water, and, settling backward, it plunged downward into the angry brook, the waters of which swirled and hissed through its branches like an immense serpent.

Unmoved the old woman kept her place, muttering to herself, "Ha! I knew it would come before long; all day the birds have been restless, and Ruth has never been done with her wild talk. O Lord! how long, how long!" she suddenly exclaimed, striking her forehead with her clinched hand, "how long dost Thou delay Thy vengeance! Deliver him up to me. Ah, my God! with his sunny face and laughing, careless ways. Why should I hesitate? Did he stop to think, when he flattered my girl with his kindness, that by it he loosed the tongue of scandal upon her, and the end is the same—the same—and my brain whirls and reels as though I, too, was growing mad." A deep sigh of exhausted passion follow this out-break, and dropping her arms wearily, she turned to enter the cottage. She was of that type, rare fortunately for the good of the community, but still to be met with in the far Eastern States, in which an old tinge of Puritanism, united with a half-crazed imagination, had developed religious fanaticism capable of resulting in dangerous deeds. Suddenly she stopped, with a quick gesture of listening.

A voice, like an echo amidst the turbulence of the elements, was carried to her ears by a sudden blast of the storm, and, putting both hands to her mouth, she sent

forth a ringing cry of answer. The distant call was heard again, and then—a crushing of bushes, a rolling, sullen noise as of stones and loosened earth sliding, a heavy plunge and sickening fall, a faint groan, then—silence.

Chill with a nameless dread, and with trembling fingers which all but refused the task, she lighted a lantern and went forth, without protection for her gray hairs, in search of—what? At last she came upon *it*—an undistinguishable heap in the darkness, but quiet, so quiet.

He lay flat on his face, the broken branch of a tree in one hand and the fingers of the other scratched and bleeding and still grasping the treacherous stones at which he had clutched in his despair.

Mehitable Phelps had all her life been “a hewer of wood and drawer of water,” and the habit of hard work, combined with an unusually strong physique, had given her strength far beyond that usually bestowed upon woman, so that now, with no hand to help save her own, she contrived to bring the injured man into her dwelling and lay him, still unconscious, upon her best bed.

Applying such simple remedies as she had at hand, she was at length rewarded by a long-drawn, quivering sigh, and with a weak uplifting of the eyes they rested upon her face in a bewildered look of inquiry.

Mehitable continued her task of examination in rigid silence, moving now an arm, now a leg, and carefully bending every joint. Finally, placing her strong arm under his shoulders, she said: “Put your arms around my neck and see if you can lift yourself.” Cedric obeyed the command, for such was its tone, and found that, though badly bruised and shaken, he could accomplish the feat without serious inconvenience.

“You’ll do,” said Mehitable, gently laying him back on the pillow; “you’re only well shaken up. You may thank the trees that you got off so easily, for they

broke your fall. I suppose you lost your way, for no one in their senses would wander around the Devil’s Rock at dark. Mayhap he’s a friend of yours, and they say he looks after his own.”

Cedric laughed faintly. “He must have treasured up a spite against me, then, for I could have sworn I heard a voice calling me and felt a push as I went over the edge of that infernal cliff.”

“Possibly you did,” said Mehitable, dryly; “strange sights and sounds have been heard on that rock, and there is not another in this country, man, woman, or child, that would live in this house but me. It suits me well enough, I’m comfortable, and he don’t disturb me,” and Mehitable strode to the closet, taking therefrom a bottle, and pouring out a small quantity of its contents in a glass, held it to Cedric’s lips nor left him until he had drained the last drop of the bitter draught.

“There, now,” she said, moving away, “I shall leave you and you can go to sleep. Yes! you who are young and strong can sleep all night, and awake to strength and happiness, but we—the old and the wretched—who need it most, are condemned to toss and groan through the thousand tortures that the darkness brings, welcoming the sun, not as a joy, but as a token that the end of all is one horrible night the nearer. You had better thank God that He let you off so well; ‘tisn’t every one that He deals so gently with.”

“You’re right, mother,” answered Cedric; “and you give good advice; I’ll heed what you say. Good-night.”

The potent influence of the drug administered by Mehitable had commenced its work, the light of the candle grew fainter and fainter, the objects in the room more and more indistinct, and to Cedric’s drowsily, searching mind came like an echo out of the past, “from lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence and famine, from battle and murder, and from sudden death.” “Good Lord,

"Thou hast delivered me," died on Cedric's lips as he sank into a profound slumber.

Gently and softly the dawn lifted its gates in the eastern sky, disclosing through the opening a glimpse of clear, pale-green, and stepping forth, with rosy blushes peeped over the tops of the mountains at the sleeping valleys below, all hidden as they were in billows of misty vapor rolling up a phantom sea, and broken here and there by the spire of some tall tree, like the masts of a wrecked and sunken vessel, piercing the element by which they had been engulfed. Still the spirit of the dawn fluttered and lingered, until, with the advent of the sun, her blushes were lost in the golden radiance of his coming. Down he strode along his stairway of amethyst and topaz, emerald and ruby, and throwing the glory of his presence to the valleys beneath, cleft the waves of the misty sea, until it gave up its concealed treasures, and trees and lakes, homesteads and villages grew out, one by one, like figures of the past on the background of a living memory. One bright ray wandered in at Cedric's window, lighting up the dingy chamber, and gliding over his bed fell softly upon his face.

He turned uneasily, then opened his eyes. "Twixt sleeping and waking the strangeness of his surroundings failed to make their impression, and turning his back to his brilliant visitor, he settled himself for another nap, but unaccustomed sounds caught his ear, the effort of listening roused him, and this time he opened his eyes in earnest, thoroughly alive to all impressions.

At first he failed to comprehend where he was, and his eyes searched the room, seeking in vain for some familiar object. He saw a scantily furnished room scrupulously clean, with a roof sloping on one side until within a few feet of the ground; an ancient chest of drawers that would have been worth its weight in gold to a fashionable collector stood against the

wall, with a small and equally antiquated looking-glass suspended above it by a cord and held up by two long pins with great flat, painted heads driven into the wall, a strip of rag-carpet covered the painted floor, and the large four-post bedstead with dimity hangings, a small washstand, and two stiff wooden chairs completed the inventory of the furniture.

A door into an adjoining room stood open, and it was from that quarter that the strange sounds proceeded that had aroused him. Painfully sitting up he saw a curious sight.

In front of a blazing wood fire that had stretched in front of it for protection a rude wire fender, crouched a female, clad in white, softly singing to herself in a low, sweet voice.

From the contour of her form and the disheveled hair on which a vagrant sunbeam gleamed, Cedric judged that the woman was young, but the face remained hidden and the voice was trembling as that of age.

Suddenly the singing ceased, the woman arose, displaying a slight and graceful figure in which there was something strangely familiar, and in the endeavor to analyze this breath of remembrance Cedric became more and more puzzled. Suddenly she raised her head, still with the face turned away, and, whistling with a plaintive and peculiar note, stretched out her hand, when, circling down with outspread wings, came a robin, who perched upon the thin, white hand looking up inquiringly into her face. She lavished soft caresses upon him, and holding him closely to her mouth, thus spoke:

"O sweetheart redbreast! have you done your errand? have you searched and found? Ah, rogue, are you sure you have not hidden my happiness, my lost happiness? They call me now 'Poor Ruth,' they used to say 'Sweet Ruth,' 'Pretty Ruth,' 'Gay little Ruth.' Are you sure all this is not hidden under your wings? Ah, wicked bird!" she exclaimed

with a cry, "you have bitten me. I will have no more of you. You are one of the scandal-biters who poison and kill. Out of my sight," she continued, stamping her foot and wildly throwing off the frightened bird. "I hate you, I hate you!" and she hid her face in her hands, sobbing piteously.

Cedric saw Mehitable's tall figure cross the floor hurriedly, the door leading into his room was quickly closed, and the sound of the girl's bitter weeping gradually ceased under the soothing tones of the elder woman.

"Poor thing!" said Cedric to himself, as with great difficulty, for he was so stiff and sore that he could hardly move, he dragged himself out of bed and into his clothes, his thoughts busily occupied with the adventures of the past twenty-four hours. Painfully he paced backward and forward, his tall, broad frame becoming the central point in this contracted room. He was about to seek more extended quarters, when there came a low knock at the door, and in answer to his "come in" Mehitable entered, leaving the door open behind her.

Her face, rugged and homely, looked doubly haggard in the happy light of the young day, but her look and tone was kindly if rough as she greeted Cedric.

"So you are up and dressed; that's brave, and I'm glad to see that you can do it. I thought I had brought in a dead man last night, and you would not have been the first either who has met his death in the same way and over that same rock."

"I can never thank you enough," said Cedric, gratefully; "I shall leave you my address, and if you ever need a friend do not forget Cedric Huntingdon. In the meantime allow me—" but a scream interrupted his words and there came rushing past Mehitable a white figure, who seized him by both hands and looked with wild eyes into his horror-stricken face. "My God! it is Ruth!" he exclaimed, in suffocating tones.

"Yes Ruth—little Ruth you know—I am so glad that you have come, Cedric, for you will tell them now that you were good and true, that they need not have poisoned me, and that there could come no harm from a ray of sunlight. O me! O me! there is no sunlight any more, it is all clouds!" and dropping his hands, she fell into her mother's arms with a heart-broken moan.

Mehitable, with a glance of bitter hatred at the young man, who stood fastened to the spot by horror, led her daughter from the room. Returning, she closed and bolted the door behind her, and faced Cedric like an avenging fury. "So it is you, is it, that God has thrown into my hands, and now that you have gazed upon your work, what have you to say?"

"Speak!" she continued, catching him by the arm.

He threw off her grasp, and white to the lips, answered her. "I swear I never harmed her, nor did I ever harbor one hurtful thought against her. I loved and respected her as I would have done my sister—" here he broke down, and sank on a chair with a groan.

"O woman! this is pitiful, terrible; tell me what can I do, how came it all to pass. If you have any pity or mercy in your heart, tell me, I beseech you."

"Cedric Huntingdon, at your door lies all this evil, and the curse of a desolate mother rest upon you forever. You came, with your happy face, into my girl's life, making it pleasant with every kindness. Day after day all her spare time was claimed by you. Costly presents were heaped upon her, and pleasures of every kind were given to her, and yet you say you never harmed her! Oh! why did I not keep her at my side! Could such a state of things exist and the tongue of scandal not become loosed against a girl, no matter how innocent she might be? Could her heart remain untouched amidst such devotion? She was an innocent girl, who saw no harm in it; you, a world-wise

man, knew well what the consequences would be, and yet you did not stop to think. Oh! there are times when selfishness and thoughtlessness result in crimes as black as murder. I'll warrant me, that when you went to Europe you did not stop to think of the mischief your very kindness had wrought. No; in your selfishness you *did not think*, but the consequences remain forever. Not think," she cried, raising her hands appealingly to heaven; "not think! dost Thou hear, he did not think!"

"Well," she resumed, her hands clasped tightly over her heart, and panting for breath, "her employer, mind, a man who knew us all, came to her one day and said, 'Ruth Phelps, we can have no girl here who is spoken of as you are; here are your wages and your are discharged—'" She stopped with a gasp.

"A curse upon him for a rascally scoundrel!" broke from Cedric, quivering from head to foot with the strength of his indignation.

"Aye, he was a scoundrel," spoke Mehitable, coming closely to him with a menacing gesture. "But who put the instrument into his hand to wound her with? Who gave cause for the poison of scandal to spread among her friends and neighbors, for ill-news travels fast, and soon they knew the worst, but not the truth. The malice and spite of gossiping tongues worked its end when it laid her on a delirious bed of sickness. Better she had died then than live as she does now. At your door this misery rests, and so I say I curse you, I curse you! I had thought to have had my fill of vengeance, but as God has spared your life so must I. Had He meant it otherwise, He would have flung you broken and dying at my feet. Thy will! Thy will!" she exclaimed, looking upward with a wild gleam of ecstasy in her eyes. "It is a bitter cup, but I will drain it, even as Thou didst. Oh! it tears my heart in two to give you back your life, for mine it was until He saw fit to

make it His. But, Cedric Huntingdon, cross not my path again. Your life would not be safe with me another day." The woman's passion shook her like a leaf, and the nails of her clinched hand were purple as they sank into the insensible flesh.

Like a man of stone sat Cedric, his face hidden, no motion betraying even the sense of hearing.

Mehitable's eyes devoured him like a hungry wolf, and a hidden impulse pushed her gradually toward him, her hands outstretched, and head thrust forward, like any other beast of prey.

Suddenly she stopped, and, throwing up her arms, called loudly, "Yes, yes, I will obey Thee, I *will* obey Thee!" then rushed from the room, nor cast another look behind.

Cedric sat motionless, with the strained immobility of extreme self-control. He dared not, even by the movement of a muscle, loosen his hold upon himself, but the tortures of the fiends held a saturnalia in his heart. Remorse assailed him with her iron teeth and tore in shreds his feelings, and Grief and Pity followed weeping in her train and fed upon his heart until the answering brain cried aloud and Reason all but tottered on her throne.

We know not the toughness of the fabric of human life until the storms of despair have swept over our heads leaving us still alive. Men do not die easily; the emotions play upon their natures with many variations, dropping the melody out of sight and filling the world with discord, but still, with humanity as in the compositions of the great masters, the simple melody ends as well as it begins all.

To his aid at length came Justice, and, as her scales are evenly balanced, the weight of his innocence of crime restored the lost equipoise of his judgment. True to himself, he kept the fine dividing line between strict justice and plausible excuse, and the small serpents of extenua-

tion were crushed relentlessly by a sense of the truest honor.

It was a hard-fought battle. Great drops of torture stood on his forehead, and falling, mingled with the tears that he could not wholly restrain. He thought of his brilliant future, over the horizon of which this cloud would ever rest, obscuring his brightest days, and thrusting between the woman he loved and himself its overshadowing influence, and a feeling of bitter impatience and rebellion relaxed the strain on heart and mind by presenting the smaller passion of self-interest. He started up and paced, panther-like, from end to end of the small room, with his heart and head aflame with bitter wrath against that world which could so cruelly persecute an unoffending girl and change to poison with its slimy breath the purest intentions of friendship. He cursed Heaven and earth in his frantic excitement, when, across the storm-lashed sea of feelings was borne a sweet, clear sound. It fell upon his ear as oil upon the water, and stopping him in his mad passion, held him spell-bound. The robin in the next room had broken into a song with its rich contralto voice—a song so tender, so pathetic, that the man's angry mood passed and the vision of Ruth, gentle and loving even in her awful infirmity, arose over the wreck and ruin of his happiness as the pale, calm moon falls upon some dark and troubled pool, casting over all the light of a saddened peace, and then contrition swept over him with a solemn force, leaving but the one feeling, the one thought of restitution. "No, Ruth, poor little Ruth, you shall not suffer alone, for before love, before friends, before riches, shall my duty to you reign in my heart; aye, though it break in the struggle, so shall it be from this day forth."

The cloud of passion lifted, his old self-control returned, and as if awakening from a sleep he gazed about him, the room and its surroundings growing

gradually upon his consciousness and the routine of daily life again making its influence felt. So self-absorbed is intense feeling that the physical perceptions are for the time being totally blind.

Everything was quiet, the sun so high in the heavens that Cedric judged it to be near noon. He opened the door and listened, but no sound of voices or movement of life answered his expectancy.

He passed into the next room, but the doors of the bird-cages stood wide open. Most of their occupants had taken advantage of their unwonted freedom, and some of them still perched on the branches of the neighboring trees, as though loth to leave their familiar home. But one of the many remained, and that one was the robin, whose saving song had stilled his raging spirit. "Angel of peace shall your name be," said Cedric, looking mournfully at the bird, who answered him with a low, plaintive whistle.

There was but one other room, and that, too, was empty, and traces of a hasty flight showed themselves in articles of wearing apparel scattered here and there, and in the general disorder of the tiny home.

"I must follow them at once," thought Cedric; "they cannot have gone far, for Ruth is far too delicate for a lengthened walk."

Feeling that too much time had already elapsed since their flight, Cedric stepped out of the house, looking right and left for the path. The sunlight fell upon his worn and haggard face, bearing more than one deep scratch as the result of his accident the previous evening. It almost blinded him, and created a feeling of strangeness and incongruity with the bright day and beautiful face of nature and his passion-worn soul.

"Can it be," he said, to himself, "that it is but twenty-four hours since I started from B—, overflowing with hope and happiness, well in body and mind, and now,

I feel like an old man, my heart filled with trouble, and my body with pain."

He cut a stout staff from the nearest bush and with it supported his limping steps, taking the path which laid plainly before him, and which he would not have missed the night before, had he not been bewildered by the storm and the darkness. Painfully pursuing his way with the best speed he could command, he entered ere long a small village, the inhabitants of which appeared to have been moved from their usual serenity. As Cedric mingled among them, he greeted more than one familiar face, and answered many a kindly greeting. This was no new spot to him, and young Mr. Huntingdon was as well known and liked by the workmen of Endicott Mills, as was his uncle, the owner and their employer. Around the door of the public-house were a knot of people, some pressing forward eagerly, some standing on tip-toe, endeavoring to see over the head of his neighbor.

An impending sense of evil fell upon Cedric, and pushing through the crowd, who fell back to give him place, he entered the public parlor of the house.

From the scene that greeted him he turned away, sick and faint. Surely, that rigid form, cold in the grasp of death, was Mehitable Phelps, and the eyes that sought his so beseeching, so touching in their helplessness, were those of Ruth. She sat upon the floor, her mother's head resting in her lap, and softly stroking the gray hair and pallid face. Perceiving Cedric she said, with a faint smile, and pointing to the prostrate figure, "See, Cedric, she is asleep, and it is the first peaceful sleep she has had for a thousand years—yes, quite a thousand years. I fear she will cry again when she awakes. Oh! if I could only think she would sleep so happily forever," and she sang, in a plaintive voice, a gentle lullaby. Cedric's quick perception seized upon this phase of her hallucination, and raising her, he said: "Dear Ruth, you need not fear, she will

forever sleep thus happily, and amongst the living not one will have so quiet a rest as she. I will see no harm befalls her, and that she is not disturbed," and he pityingly led her away.

Despairing of gaining any true account of the sad affair from the various stories that poured in from all sides, he closeted himself with the landlord, and from him learned, that quite early in the day Mehitable Phelps and her daughter had come to the house, the elder woman evidently laboring under some strong excitement, and that, when in the act of bargaining for a lunch, she suddenly put her hands to her heart, and with a moan, fell dead.

"Heart disease, I suppose," ended Abel Smith, in a matter-of-fact tone, not that he was a hard-hearted man, but he had his living to make, and he had found in the course of a long public career, that too strong a demand upon his sympathies was apt to interfere with his business prospects.

"Indeed, sir," joined in his wife, "it is a sad case."

"Have they no relatives or friends?" inquired Cedric, and the woman, with true feminine pride in superior knowledge, answered, excluding her husband from the conversation:

"No, sir; Mehitable was very queer, and grew still worse after her daughter's trouble, which, sir, I will say was a scandalous shame," she continued confidentially, and speaking in a lower tone; "she was a sweet, good girl, and if the gossips had but let her alone, she would not have been the wreck she is. But, then, insanity ran in the family, and she was proud and sensitive, and it was no wonder that malicious tongues were too much for her, poor thing!" and the kind-hearted woman wiped her eyes. "I would have been a better friend to them if they would have let me, but they kept to themselves and would not be beholden to any one."

"What is to become of Ruth?" exclaimed Cedric, involuntarily.

"Heaven knows," replied Abel. "As she has no friends, I am afraid she will have to go to the poor-farm, for you see, sir, we are none of us well off, and have hard work to get along ourselves sometimes."

"Never!" said Cedric, passionately; "never shall Ruth be reduced to such a horrible extremity."

For one instant Cedric hesitated, and in that moment he seemed to have lived through ages of thought, with such lightning speed had his mind worked over and grasped the situation. The next moment his resolution was taken, and he felt a certain satisfaction that the gates of self-sacrifice had thus soon been thrown open to him. Quixotic his determination might almost have been termed, but to one of his nature it was the only thing now to be done.

"Listen to me," he said, turning to the landlord; "Ruth is my second cousin, and, as her nearest living kin, I charge myself with her welfare. I will take her away from this place, so full of bitter suggestions to her, and will place her in comfort, and so long as she lives will see that she is well cared for."

"Well, sir, that is very kind, I must say," replied Abel, hesitatingly, "but Ruth is young, pretty, and unfortunate, and—"

"Excuse me, sir," broke in the woman, drawing her husband to one side and speaking in an undertone. "Stupid," she said, "you know well enough, that is young Mr. Huntingdon of Endicott Mills. How can you help Ruth, I'd like to know, and besides, I have heard her speak of him as cousin. You'd better keep quiet and let him have his own way; she'll be a great deal better off, and, besides, if you cross him," and she shook her head knowingly, "remember, his uncle owns this house, and the young gentleman is always spoken of as his heir."

So worldly wisdom closed the eyes of prudence, and self-interest, for once, dis-

covered the best good for another. The conference ended in the acquiescence of Abel Smith and his wife, and Cedric assumed his yoke with mixed feelings of rebellion and resignation.

That evening a letter passed through the post-office of the little village, addressed to Mr. Geoffrey Huntingdon, No. — B — St., B —.

A cry of agonized renunciation it was, and ran in this wise:

"God help me, my dearest uncle, that I am obliged to write this letter. I cannot say much, but that little will blast my happiness forever. That, however, is the least consideration, for, worse than all else, it will estrange you from me, and it will be my hand that is to thrust a knife into the hearts of yourself and Katharine—I, who promised to soothe your declining years and her solitary life, and on whom, but a few days ago, you showered true and loving kindness. Would that I had died that night! But I must live—live to right a great wrong innocently committed years ago through my unwitting agency.

"Oh! forgive, forgive; you would be merciful if you knew all the bitter story.

"I shall not see you again, for I fear for my resolution.

"I return Katharine her plight—ah! I love her better than ever, believe me—and back to your hands I give all hopes of ever being more to you than any other miserable man might be. When you pray at night for the wretched and unhappy—"

Here the letter ended abruptly, as though he who penned it could write no more. In another month the windows and doors of the house in B— street were boarded up, and Cedric read in the fashionable intelligence the announcement, that "our respected fellow-citizen, Mr. Geoffrey Huntingdon, and his charming ward, Miss Katharine Howard, had sailed that week for Europe, with the intention of making a prolonged visit."

This, then, was the end, and a new

chapter of Cedric's life had opened. His whole nature had sunken into a stupid state of passive endurance, that he took good care not to break. Stolidly he lived his life, and by constant schooling turned his thoughts from the past, lived in the present, nor even dared to hope for a future.

Now and again, through this death in life, broke a wild outburst of impatience and regret, his love for Katharine impelling him irresistibly to go to her despite his resolution, and thus he wrestled in agony with the giant spirit of despair, coming out of the struggle exhausted but victorious.

The care of his helpless charge saved him from self-destruction, but there were times when he felt as though he, too, was nearing the same state of mind as that of the inmates of the asylum wherein he had placed Ruth. He gave up his elegant suite of rooms and removed to lodgings opposite the hospital; his business became gradually more and more neglected, and there seemed no alleviation to his miserable existence but his care of Ruth.

Not a moment when he was permitted to see her was he absent from her side, not a look passed unnoticed, not a want of hers unfulfilled. He then called up a smile to greet her, for her sake showed a cheerful countenance, and for the time being was at any rate less miserable. He spent the intervals between these visits wandering to and fro about the confines of the building, or watching from the window of his room to catch a glimpse of her, with the devotion of a half-crazed parent, and, indeed, his solitary, brooding existence, acting upon a morbidly sensitive conscientiousness, was fast bordering to monomania.

Ruth was happy. Her naturally sunny disposition asserted itself even amidst the ruins of her mind. She addressed Cedric as "dear, kind, good brother," and would say, laying her hand caressingly on his cheek, "so good and kind to

little Ruth. Cedric, are you not glad my mother sleeps so quietly yet; do you think that I shall ever have so pleasant a rest?"

"Yes, yes, dear Ruth, and the angels will sing you to sleep," would Cedric answer, with tears in his eyes.

She mourned no more for her mother, seemingly satisfied that she was happy, and it was only at rare intervals that the old bitter moan for her lost happiness was heard. She lived in the sunlight, and, happy as the birds, would sit and sing with them on bright and sunny days, but drooped and became sorrowful when the heavens were overcast—atmospheric influences ruling her spirit, barometer-like. So six months passed, Cedric's mental condition growing more and more desperate, when there came a change, whether for the better or the worse in its consequences to him, it would have been hard to prognosticate. Ruth, without apparent cause, commenced to droop and lose her vitality, no care or medical attention appearing to arrest the trouble, and day by day Cedric could note a loss of strength. Feeling, though he did, that death would only prove a happy change for Ruth herself, he shrank with trembling dread from what his life would be without this absorbing care and thought, and he hung each morning with breathless anxiety on the verdict of her physician.

It was during this time that Katharine Howard, amidst the glowing sun and brilliant flowers of Southern Italy, had come to her guardian and said, placing her hands in his: "Let us go home; some dreadful thing is impending, and I know that Cedric needs me. Do not frown at the mere mention of his name, dearest guardian, I *know* that he has never ceased to love me. There is some unhappy mystery connected with all this misery, and I must solve it. Take me home, dear guardian, for my heart is breaking."

Mr. Huntingdon, looking into her grieved face and beseeching eyes, felt himself molded to her will, and drew new faith from her unfaltering belief in Cedric's honor.

"I thank you, dear," he simply answered to her anxious look; "it shall be as you wish, and I, too, will share your faith. We will sail for home in the next steamer, and will do what should have been done in the first place. We will find our Cedric and say to him, 'believe in our love for you, and let us share your trouble with you, for we have confidence in your honor, and know that you could do naught to sully it.'"

So it came to pass that on one bright day in May the good steamer, bearing among its passengers Mr. Huntingdon and his ward Katharine, came to her moorings at the dock, and it was none too soon for the fortunes of Cedric, for on that morning Ruth lay dying, her hand in his, and a look of more than earthly joy in her sweet eyes.

"Oh! good, kind brother," she said, "I am going to sleep like mother, and I will ask that you, too, may be so fortunate;" and with the words, "God give my brother sleep" upon her lips, she closed her eyes, and spoke no more on earth. It was all over at last, and he was now alone—alone, indeed, and no one but his God and himself knew what bitterness that meant.

He sat with his face buried in his hands, thinking—thinking. He arraigned himself before the bar of his own conscience—in his case a merciless judge—but

search and cross-examine as he might, he could find naught of remissness where-with to convict himself, but that, although there was a satisfaction therein, failed to comfort him. His mission in life had been fulfilled, and in its performance he had sacrificed friends, love—all, and he had nothing left to live for. What, then, was the use of living?

The fact of life held nothing more for him, his interest in it was swept away, and he longed that Ruth's wish for him could come to pass; he might then at least rest, and he was so weary, that he could fight no longer. Katharine's image floated across his benumbed thoughts like a mirage, all the more loved and longed for because so unobtainable, and vanishing, left him in a deeper, darker hopelessness than ever.

His hand wandered to his hip-pocket and clasped something. Then he sat thinking again. No, it was not worth battling for—and he was so weary, yet—would he then sleep the quiet sleep that innocent Ruth had wished for him? He withdrew his hand from his pocket, and dropped his head upon the table, so weary that he did not hear the light tap at his door, did not hear the soft rustle of drapery close beside him, was only conscious of a cool hand upon his hot forehead, only felt a soft, sweet kiss, only saw Katharine Howard's loving, faithful eyes meeting his haggard look, and the overtaxed endurance broke, and he fell senseless at her feet, bathed in her tears and wrapped in a reconciled love.

H. S. ATWATER.

A RULER OF DESTINY.*

CHAPTER III.

I LISTENED.

What I heard was Jim's heavy breathing in the next room, the door of which at the boy's appealing suggestion had been left ajar.

But presently a soft, sweet, inexpressibly sad and tender harmony stole upon my sense—whether the sense of soul or body I scarcely knew—a strain æolian-like, in its thrilling emotional quality, and rising until its fine, ethereal sound seemed to transcend the capacity of material atmospheres, and to vibrate on the limitless air of that unseen world from which faint echoes, by some interior perception, appeared to float to us.

"What is it? Where is it?" I whispered; for there was a diffusive character to the notes which baffled my efforts to determine their direction.

But Cousin Margaret answered with a gesture of intense absorbed listening. The vibration was growing fainter and fainter on our sense. We might even have questioned if we had heard it at all. Were we not the victims of a beautiful illusion?

Margaret drew a deep breath, and sat down on the bed beside me.

"You heard it, did you not, Sydney?" she asked.

"I certainly *thought* I heard the loveliest harmony that ever fell on my ear," I said, doubtfully.

"Sydney, that symphony was an

original, and I believe an unwritten composition," Margaret said, solemnly. "The only hand that ever played it has been in the grave for many years."

I caught my breath. Under a sober assurance like that, I could fancifully feel the whole air of the house palpitant with invisible things. A silence fell between us again. We listened in expectation of we knew not what.

Suddenly Margaret's hand was once more uplifted with order of silence, though I had uttered no sound. There was a step in the lower hall plainly audible upon the bare floor. Simultaneously we started up, and because Margaret glided swiftly out into the dim passage and vanished down the dark stairway, I followed closely, not without vague fears and tremors, but impelled to stand by my friend into whatever dangers, natural or supernatural, she might rashly plunge. As we entered the parlor toward which we had fancied the steps approaching, it appeared that we heard them retreating in the direction of a gallery communicating with a distant wing of the house. But might it not have been the tap of the overhanging branches, lightly swept against the wall in the suddenly risen wind? Was it quite certain, indeed, that we had heard footsteps at all?

What was very certain, the next moment, was a howl of terror from Jim, and fearful of the exploits on which his protective comrade, the gun, might be

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venturing in the dim light, we called up to him that it was only ourselves who were making a disturbance, and he must not be alarmed,

"Oh! O Miss Heath! Miss Heath! I seen it!" he blubbered, stumbling in from the balcony as we came up-stairs.

"Saw what; pray tell me?" calmly interrogated the mistress, in cool surprise.

Jim gathered courage from her rational and composed demeanor.

"I'll tell ye," he gasped, but breathing more easily; "I heerd a door slam som'ers nuther, an' I sprung up quick an' grabbed my gun an' run out the winder, an' then I seen somethin'—WHITE—a-walkin' off between the trees, an' I yelled at um, an' then I brought up my gun to fire, an' it was gone!"

Jim dropped down on his bed after this startling communication, and suddenly recollecting that he had not put on his trousers, hastily disposed himself under the covers.

"Nonsense!" said Margaret, with an air of superior knowledge and wisdom, "you were half asleep, Jim, and you saw a drift of moonlight between the shadows of the trees. As your vision grew clearer and your senses fresher, why the thing was gone; that was all."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Jim, meekly, "an' mebbe, it *might* be, it was the old elum tree I heerd a-slammin' against the ruff."

I ran back in our room, sat down on the floor, and laughed hysterically.

"It is as good as the opera, Cousin Margaret," I said, gathering in the trailing girdle of the wrapper so hastily donned.

"Well, don't gird yourself for another scene, Sydney," she answered, throwing off her own azure robe, in which I should like the ghost to have seen her. "Let us get to bed and forget that we have been the stupid victims of an hallucination."

Once convinced that we were really suffering an illusion consequent upon an ex-

cited imagination, it was a comparatively easy matter to compose ourselves, and to close our senses resolutely to any chance sound that did not appeal directly to our understanding.

"No doubt," I said, "the melody was but the rising wind in some crevice of the wall, where it found some reed-like obstruction on which to start the aeolian strain that our fancy intensified and finally wrought into a quite heavenly harmony."

Margaret shivered slightly, but assented to my theory of explanation, counseling me to put the matter wholly out of thought and to court that utter vacuity of mind essential and seductive to sleep.

When at last the slumber of weariness stole upon us and sealed our senses to the outer world, we slept the sleep of the just, unbroken until the sun, at an amazing altitude, looked in at our hospitable window. All the bright, dewy air was jubilant with song of birds, and an exhilaration as of wine seemed to infuse us with every breath.

On the verandas below we heard the shuffling feet and changing voice of Jim, who was evidently engaged in clearing the rubbish of leaves and dead twigs from steps and walks, and perhaps looking timidly after traces of the "somethin' in WHITE," that had baffled him in the uncertain light of the moon.

From the region of the kitchen came sounds of pleasant domestic preparations, indicative of the arrival of Miss Lorinda Johnson, the eldest of her house, who had consented on the previous evening to come into service—provided that she might have as an accessory and assistant in her duties one Leander Butler, who, from the downcast glance and bashful wriggle with which his name was mentioned, we judged to be the young woman's suitor, or at least her most trusted protector against foes of the uncanny kind that were suspected to infest Sunny Slope. We had not seen Leander, but a drawling, amiable, masculine voice in alternation with Lorinda's

brisk, decided business tones suggested that she had made no delay in installing her partner in office, and the domestic duties were evidently exalted and halved by the charm of mutual interest and helpfulness.

"Why, it will be like feeding on manna in the wilderness to eat daily the viands prepared and served under the billing and cooing of a pair of turtle-doves like Lorinda and Leander," I said, as I hurried on my gingham gown, which I supposed the proper uniform for a rural summer morning, but which a shiver of goose-flesh prompted me to exchange immediately for a friendly flannel.

"For the matter of that," returned Cousin Margaret, with the iconoclastic wisdom of long experience, "I shall have to break the sentimental images of your fancy by predicting that instead of manna we shall receive a surfeit of burned steaks, sodden bread, sloppy coffee, and salty pickles, and, as a consequence of the culinary service by this 'pair of turtle-doves,' you must prepare yourself for the misery of a bit of indigestion."

At that moment, from the foot of the stairs, Lorinda's voice rose, firm and vibrant as a bugle-blast, "Miss Heath! Miss Turrell! Breakfast's all ready 'n waiting! Better hurry up 'fore it gits cold!"

"Shade of the great Napoleon!" I murmured, with a frantic grasp for the belt of my blouse, which I adjusted on the march. "Let us hasten before the General—"

"Who apparently is *not* a turtle-dove," laughingly interpolated Margaret.

"Sends up her body-guard and officer-in-chief to capture us," I concluded, springing for the stairs.

We found Lorinda marshaling her entire squadron of breakfast dishes upon the table with an order of tactics with which we were unfamiliar, but we advanced boldly to the posts assigned us, while Lorinda stood off, with beckoning nod to a copper-colored young man, with very red hair, who stood, with shoulders

strongly braced, against the casement of the kitchen door.

"This is the gentleman, Mr. Butler, who I told you would assist me in the work here," announced the mistress of ceremonies, with heightened color, pulling at the strings of her apron in temporary embarrassment.

Mr. Butler returned our salutation with a spasmodic bow, clutching with both hands at the door-posts as if in the act of bearing them away, reminding us of Sampson and the gates of Gaza.

As he did not appear to know his office, and Lorinda appointed him to none, Margaret, out of pure kindness and compassionate fellow-feeling, summoned him to some trifling, unobtrusive table service, with a flow of pleasant talk that covered confusion and soon rendered him unconscious of his painful multiplicity of hands and feet.

"This here coffee aint so good as 'twould ha' been if 't hadn't stood so long," explained Lorinda, with a covert reflection upon our tardiness that excused, in her estimation, the lifeless, muddy liquid that she passed to me.

"Them biskit's got too much soleratus in," she remarked, with an accusing glance at the plate of greenish-yellow disks which Leander was presenting to us. It was not Lorinda, but the innate depravity, the natural, grasping greed of "them biskit" for "soleratus" that put that sickly, bilious hue upon them very evidently.

"That there omelette got scorched a little," further explained the apologetic but irresponsible Lorinda. "Leander, he put in a flash o' dry wood at just the wrong minute."

But this culpable action on the part of Leander was noted with such a charming smile directed to Leander himself, that we generously left the omelette untasted, with an unselfish view to the relish with which Leander might eat it.

A sudden scheme of benevolent use presented itself to my mind, and, without

reflection I said: "Oh! have you ever taken cooking lessons, Lorinda?"

"'Cookin' lessons?'" ejaculated the maiden. "Good land! I've known how to cook since I was knee-high."

I was abashed.

"Beg pardon. But as I took a course of lessons in a cooking-school last winter, I thought perhaps you might like me to tell you what I learned," I modestly ventured.

Lorinda laughed incredulously. "The idea," she said, "of goin' to school to learn to cook!"

"There are certain chemical laws and useful rules, you know, that would help you to avoid failures," I gently insinuated, but with a sense that I was losing ground in Lorinda's favor.

"Girls that's brought up to cook an' work don't need no such fussin' is that," she coolly enlightened me.

Cousin Margaret smiled covertly over my baffled scheme of service, which was not without a selfish motive, as she perceived.

"I think, Sydney, we shall have to look after a girl (not so well 'brought up' as Lorinda), who may afford you an opportunity for imparting your scientific knowledge."

Lorinda sniffed and exchanged amused glances with Leander.

Soon after breakfast, and before we had time to look the place over by daylight, Mrs. Heath's agent, Mr. Spencer, presented himself, with apologies for any apparent remissness of duty.

"My legal business would not permit me to be here to receive you, madam," he said somewhat pompously, "but I came down to deliver your orders to the tenants, and supposed that everything would be put in good shape before you arrived. From what I learned this morning, I fear you did not find very ample preparations."

"None at all," replied Mrs. Heath, with no acknowledgment of excuses. "I

arrived with my friend, tired and exhausted by our journey, to find myself excluded from my own house by a rumored tenant whom no one had seen, and who was too inhospitable to open the doors and offer us refreshment."

"In other words, we found the host not at home," I laughingly volunteered to explain.

Mr. Spencer smiled grimly, and cleared his throat. "It is about this mysterious tenant of your house, Mrs. Heath, that I wished to talk with you. It was too absurd a thing to write you about, though if you had not informed me of your proposed return to the place, I should have been compelled to ask your advice in regard to the trouble, as there was, or is, a general disturbance in the neighborhood, and your best tenants have threatened to leave."

"Perhaps the best thing they could do, if so stupid or irrational as to be driven out by fear of a ghost," remarked Cousin Margaret.

"Oh! I don't know," dissented Mr. Spencer, doubtfully. "The Johnsons, particularly, have been very faithful to the Heath interests for generations back. If there is any deterioration in the present stock, it may be owing to the decay of the Heath enterprise, and the consequent failure of any inspiration to faithfulness."

A quiver of pain shot like a swift cloud over Margaret's face. "I admit that I have been very derelict in duty to our interests here," she said, humbly, "but I will try to make amends. What is it that you wished especially to ask my advice about?"

"Why, since you are here, no doubt you will yourself see the propriety of doing what I would have suggested," Mr. Spencer began, hesitatingly.

"Excuse me. I am afraid my perceptions are less acute than you judge," Mrs. Heath remarked in the embarrassing pause.

"Well, perhaps you have not yet learned that there has always been among the country people here an uncanny-feeling about the closing up of that wing of the house in which—in which the Doctor died so suddenly, and—and—mysteriously—" the gentleman modestly explained.

Margaret's face and attitude became all at once as irresponsible and uncommunicative as marble.

"And as the disturbances, popularly regarded as something supernatural, are thought to proceed from that quarter," continued Mr. Spencer, "it has seemed to me only fair to remove all grounds for superstition—if not suspicion—by opening the place to free entrance and inspection. It has occurred to my mind that the peculiar mystery hanging about that isolated portion of the house might offer concealment to crime, if there were any temptation to crime in such a neighborhood—"

"I do not think I understand you," said Margaret, coldly.

Feeling that I was somehow *de trop* in this consultation about affairs which did not concern me, I had sauntered indifferently toward the door, and though I would have given much to know all that Margaret might say about that secret room, I was sure that I had no right to hear what she did not choose to say to me alone, and I passed out and left the two in undisturbed conference over the perplexing mystery of Margaret's past.

Looking for my hat, I reflected on the curious circumstance which had attracted my attention while I lingered in the parlor—a scientific journal of recent date on the table, and the burned end of a cigarette on the floor beneath it. These could not have been dropped by Leander nor Jim—in fact, I doubted if any but ourselves had entered this room since our arrival. As I walked out on the piazza and around the house, of which I had not yet obtained a full view, I came upon

Leander leaning on his wood-saw and Lorraine sitting on a block, with a glass-towel in hand and a tumbler, which evidently required so much polishing that she had taken it outside to enjoy Leander's society during the operation.

She rose apologetically as I approached, coloring slightly.

"I just stepped out to speak with Leander about—well, about not going too nigh that side of the house," she said, with an ominous glance to the left of the corner where we were standing. I looked in that direction, and saw a low wing, which had apparently been the latest addition to old mansion, with which it did not harmonize, suggesting an ugly excrescence thrown out by some inward distemper.

From the side on which I viewed it there was no outlook through window or door, and it was obviously illuminated only by a generous skylight, with shutters adjustable from the interior.

"That was the laboratory of the Doctor—Miss Heath's husband, you know," explained Leander, stroking his red mustache between his thumb and forefinger.

"And where he was found dead—and where the sounds is heard," added Lorraine, in a hushed, blood-curdling tone. "Dear me! I could tell ye a lot, but Miss Heath she's just set down her foot and forbid any of us so much as speakin' of ghosts, or thinkin' about 'em—'s if we could put an end to 'em 'n that way!"

"A very reasonable way, I am sure," I said, walking on, that I might offer no temptations to the young woman to disobey the orders I had myself heard given.

There were delightful glimpses of woods and hills beyond, which promised full gratification of my rambling desires, but for the present I was contented to stroll in a leisurely way along a grassy lane bordered by a stone-wall so exquisitely tinted with gray and green lichens intermingled with soft, beautiful browns that I found it a rich study in art. At the end of it I came into an orchard, that

appeared to be a sort of social palace and co-operative house for a great concourse of birds holding a high festival of song, while engaged in the arts of domestic architecture and the support of the young families, many members of which were beginning to flutter out upon the branches in recognition of their airy destiny, and with faint pipings of melody blending sweetly with the full, joyous chorus.

In such a happy environment I was hardly conscious of the swift flight of the morning, and only when wearied with watching the white drift of clouds over the blue June sky, did I notice the vertical rays of the sun denoting high noon. Returning to the house—still with steps lingering through the gray-bordered butter-cup lane—I found, with a sense of relief, that Mr. Spencer had departed, whether with the consent of the mistress to open the hall of mystery as he had proposed, I could not guess.

Margaret was nowhere in view when I entered. I went through the rooms, calling her. As I stood at the entrance of the gallery, which was in a line with the sky-lighted room—though showing no communication with it—she suddenly emerged from behind a high secretary, which she immediately rolled back to its place against the wall. She was looking pale and agitated, and she carried in her hand a roll of manuscript which she made no effort to conceal, though she evidently desired that no notice should be taken of it.

"Dear Sydney," she said, "I fear I am unintentionally forcing you to a very dull, dreary time. Try to be patient with me to-day, and amuse yourself as happily as you can—"

I stayed the rising tide of self-reproach with a kiss upon her perfect mouth. "Think of me as in Paradise with no Adam nor serpent to entice me," I replied, flitting out into the sunshine again, while Margaret went to her room.

CHAPTER IV.

JIM had dogged my footsteps like a silent shadow as I strolled about the place, venturing no remark unless I questioned him; but I had seen only flashes of the red suspenders of "Flander" at a remote and prudent distance from the house, which he could not be induced to approach.

"He's wonderful took with you," Jim informed me, when I inquired into the mystery of Flander's circuit about the grounds, up to a certain line which he never passed, "but he's so 'fraid o' seein' a spook or suthin', if he comes nigh the house, that he watches ye at a distance."

Late in the afternoon I went down to the line of evergreens that seemed to be Flander's boundary to foes invisible, and was received by him with a broad grin, and a prompt response to my cordial greeting.

"I'm going to take a walk," I said, "and I shall want you for a guide."

Flander's eyes sparkled under his ragged hat-brim, and he blew a little whistle of exultation as he made a quick spring in the air. "I'll be ready in a jiffy," said he, bounding down the walk toward the Johnson cottage. "Jes' lemme go in the house half a minute."

I leaned on the gate waiting, and unavoidably hearing the altercation going on within. Presently Mrs. Johnson came and stood in the door with arms akimbo.

"That boy, just because you asked him to walk with you, thinks 't he mus' go an' dress up," she said, with humorous relish of such absurdity.

"I hope he will not make himself too fine," I returned, "I had contemplated a portrait study of him."

"Oh! law! I should want him to have his best clothes on when you took his picter," exclaimed the fond mother, behind whose ample figure appeared three blooming daughters, younger and less self-reliant than Lorinda, and all gazing at me with undisguised curiosity, as if I were

some strange animal recently escaped from the Zoo.

"Don't it seem dreadful dull an' poky for you up there 't that old house?" questioned Mrs. Johnson, solicitously. "Just you run down here an' visit with the girls whenever you feel like it. Miss Heath, bein' so much older 'n you, can't be so much company. Still, she does hold her own remarkable, I must say. Declare for 't, I was beat to see how young she looked last night when I went up 't th' house. 'Pon my word, she didn't seem a day older 'n Lorindy, an' Lorindy will be twenty-four come September. But then these ladies that don't have to WORK!" and Mrs. Johnson heaved a deep sigh over the discrepancies in fortune that in her view made one woman young and beautiful and another old and ugly.

She had been gradually approaching me, with that confidential and mysterious air which pertains to the feminine creature when she desires to discuss the family foibles and weaknesses of her sex.

"D'ye know," she said, leaning over the gate, from which I had slightly withdrawn, "it's been a great wonderment to us folks 's to what Miss Heath's been doin' with herself all these years. She's shunned this place 's if 'twas haanted sure 'nough, an' we' expected that she was married to that fellow she was in love with before she had the Doctor—or so it was said—but—"

"Oh! here's my guide!" I exclaimed, with relief, as Flander appeared in a pair of clean trousers strapped a little higher than ever, and his freckled face boldly set forth by a polo cap, matching his red suspenders, and which was so evidently a crowning grace in his sight that I had to approve, though preferring the flapping and ragged brim of his picturesque old straw-hat.

"I've washed 'em," he said, gravely, looking down at his bare, brown feet, "but I thought I wouldn't bother to put on my

shoes—it's much as I can stand to wear 'em to Sunday-school—"

I was not sorry that Flander had hurried in his festive preparations, and I lost no time in escaping from the confidence which my temporary entertainer was threatening to thrust upon me. Nothing gives me such a shuddering, shrinking sense of meanness as this curious, idle, if not vile gossip of women about women. Least of all could I listen to any underhanded communications relating to Margaret, however interesting such communications might be.

Flander, in his office of guide, led me in somewhat devious ways with information on points of interest altogether original and entertaining.

After an hour's ramble, we came around a point of woods upon a lovely meadow, sloping down to a tiny lake shining like a mirror in its setting of willows and aspens.

"Hallo!" cried my leader, with sudden elation. "D'ye see that girl a-riding on a mowing machine? That's my school-teacher—that's Esther Day!"

He clambered upon the field-gate and gave that peculiar whoop of the boy savage indicative of his enthusiasm and admiration for this chariot queen of the hay-field—a later Maud Müller of the nineteenth century, who would not leave the judge to sentimental dreams of "It might have been."

I, too, leaned against the gate, watching the approach of a span of spirited gray horses, held in check by a rather slender but evidently firm-muscled young woman perched on a high seat, where she appeared to balance herself by a tight grip on the lines carried skillfully in her small, leathern-gloved hands, while she watched, from beneath her wide-brimmed straw hat, the sweep of the keen knives cutting their wide swath through the meadow.

"I didn't know that a girl could do a thing like that," I said, with a touch of Flander's admiration.

"Esther Day can! She's a boss girl!" returned the boy, catching off his polo in a vigorous swing that betrayed the secret of the parting between the brim and crown of his hat. "She can cut a better swath than her beau can—pa says so. He aint good for nothin' but to make speeches!"

The unutterable scorn of this definition of the uselessness of Miss Day's "beau" was added testimony to the worthlessness of words as compared with the value of deeds.

"Please introduce me to Miss Day when she comes near enough," I said. "I want to be made acquainted with her."

"Wh-a-t?" questioned Flander, willing but wondering what was expected of him.

"Tell Miss Day who I am, and speak Miss Day's name to me," I explained.

There was not time to give a practical illustration before the young reaper was ordering her champing horses to "back!" under the tightened rein with which she turned them on the side of the field next to us, and I saw quite distinctly her fine, clear face, not beautiful after the conventional types of feminine beauty, perhaps, but far more interesting in its revelation of individual character.

As she drove slowly along to a point opposite the gate where we were resting, she pushed back her broad, unadorned hat and turned her beaming face full upon us.

"Am I doing the work well, Philander?" she asked, with a smile open enough to reveal a row of pearly, perfect teeth that in themselves would have redeemed a large degree of ugliness.

But Flander was straightened to accomplish the polite office laid upon him, and, without response to Miss Day's pleasant salutation, he burst forth with startling promptness:

"This is Miss Tyrrell, the girl what come with Miss Heath from Filadelphy! I've told her who you be!"

A soft, clear, silvery peal of laughter rang out upon the air, and Miss Day, drawing the reins upon her steeds, stepped lightly down from her seat, and pulling off her leather glove as she came forward, reached out one fair hand, while the other held its quiet grip of command upon the lines.

"Since you know—since Philander has told you what sort of a 'bee' I 'be,' allow me to say how happy I am to meet you," she said, looking in my face with a fresh, eager interest, as close and curious as that manifested by the girls at the Johnson cottage, but totally different in its nature. The wide, dilating pupils of these eyes, whose color I could not distinguish, were not taking into consideration the fashion of my apparel, but were looking deep into my soul, and I shrank insensibly lest the inquisitorial gaze should merge in an expression of dissatisfaction or disappointment.

"I have been following you with delighted eyes for the last five minutes, hoping for the opportunity of a closer meeting," I responded, with entire sincerity, to her cordial greeting.

"You were not shocked, then, at my lordly mount of the mower?" she questioned, smiling. "It isn't exactly in order. I can't say that any one but Philander here has ever cheered me, but I am doing a material service, nevertheless, and in addition to that I am gaining a certain skill and precision that is a mental service as well. But I didn't stop to explain and apologize. Mayn't I ask you to take a champion drive around the hay-course with me? You are small—I am not large—there will be ample room for both on this seat, which was planned for some portly lord of the field, don't you see?"

"Nothing would give me more pleasure than such a drive," I said with swift assent, feeling a sudden and absorbing interest in this charming girl, whose free and refined expression, so totally unlike the coarse, uncultivated address of the

rural people with whom I had so far come in contact, filled me with surprise and curiosity.

The occupation in which I found her engaged seemed utterly incongruous with the culture evident in her speech and manner, and I gazed at her in doubt if I had not come upon a princess in disguise; for I was yet too ignorant of life to have learned that the utmost refinement of nature may exist in the midst of vulgar and uncouth associations, the difference being one of character rather than of opportunity—opportunity being indeed but a subservient to character.

"Jump down, Philander, and open the gate for Miss Tyrrell," commanded the field-marshall, beckoning the boy from his post of outlook.

"I'm not sure that Flander will excuse me for deserting him," I said, as he promptly obeyed his order.

"Run down to the lake, where some of the boys are getting ready for a swim," Miss Day said, "or, if you like better, toss hay till Miss Tyrrell calls for you."

"Guess I'll wait till I see how she likes ridin' on a mowin' m'chine," decided Flander, standing to his duty as escort and protector. "She won't have nothing t' hang on to if them hosses should take notion to run 'way," he added, as Miss Day established me by her side and started afield again.

"What forethought the boy displays," she laughed. "Does the suggestion make you timid? The horses are entirely safe. Do you sit quite comfortably? Are you sure you will like the jolting motion?"

Satisfied on all these points, Miss Day drew her reins more taut and divided her attention between me and her work.

"You come like a breeze from a world I know of but in books," she said, after a few desultory remarks, "and you must excuse me if I seem rude and stare at you a great deal. Isn't it queer that I feel as if I might say anything I please to you, whom I have known perhaps ten minutes,

while with people that I see every day I can't talk at all of things which I think most about?"

I smiled in a silence as intelligible as speech to this eager young creature, who seemed inclined to skip preliminaries to a full acquaintance, and strike at the heart of things at once.

"We waste so much time in explaining ourselves to people who cannot understand and approve us, and after all we get no nearer an understanding in the end, do you think?" she naively questioned. "It seems about the best thing to do is, to go straight ahead and mind your own convictions of right without trying to convince anybody of your rational purpose, though sympathy would be very sweet, don't you know?"

"But, of course," I said, "you have that from some source; we all have."

"Oh! I am not that sentimental damsel who goes about pining and sighing and writing verses because nobody understands or sympathizes with her—don't think that," stoutly affirmed Miss Day, with a pull at the reins that nettled the spirited grays. "But I'm not satisfied to live the life of the girls and women about me. It depresses—it irritates me. I want to feel the swift electric currents of broader thought, stronger action. Of course, I know still waters may run deep, but the most of us rural folk live in the shallows, and lose what force we have in trickling over pebbles."

"But you know," I said, catching at her figure of speech, "you feed with pure and steadfast inflow the swift currents and the wide seas—"

"Yes! yes!" she interrupted. "I know all about this dead level, under-the-ground feeding of the world's great forces; but, I'm afraid I'm not quite satisfied with such passive, unconscious power which with me may only culminate in the grand character of—my son, who may, possibly, never be born."

And she laughed, not lightly as at first,

watching closely the keen blades of the mower, which she discovered were not running quite true. "Whoa! What do you mean, Prince, by this nettish, headstrong air that you are putting on?" she called, pulling at the bit of her near horse, who was tossing his head, and champing with evident dissatisfaction. "Do you know, this fellow always appears to understand what I'm thinking about, and responds to my moods as if they were communicated by an electric current along the leather lines. You wouldn't suppose, would you, that a dead strip of animal hide could be a conductor of mental states?"

"Hardly—nor would the theologian admit that Prince could be a recipient of such communication," I said. "But I have arrived at that stage of wisdom in which I will not question the possibility of a thing merely because I don't happen to understand it. Is it the magic sympathy between you and Prince that leads you to this rather unusual occupation?"

"Call it a pastime," corrected Miss Day, with her soulful eyes on mine. "I love to be out in the free world of sunshine, winds, and clouds. Life seems longer when I go back to the house—but this isn't all. Shall I tell you? I fear I shall bore you with so much talk about myself—I am so interesting to myself, you know—but this is the reason of what you call my occupation. I have undertaken to save my father an extra farm-hand this summer, and to do this in addition to my duties in the school-room—you can see my teacher's court over there in that little, white square-box of a house with green shutters—I have to exercise a superior intelligence, of course, and have an eye to interests which the ordinary farm-laborer wouldn't consider at all. In a word, I have constituted myself my father's ally in the higher service of the farm, with a selfish view, first of all, to winning his consent and assistance to a course at Vassar, but—it is strange, I

should tell you this—familiarity with the farm business and accounts has revealed to me the unsuspected fact that we are deeply in debt, and that my office is to retrench instead of adding to expenditures. At the same time, I'm awfully vexed with the moral question as to whether one should remain faithful to one's self and devote one's energies to development of individual capacity, or whether it is better to sacrifice personal ambition to real or fancied duty to others?"

"I'm afraid you will not find the solution of that problem in my eyes," I said, meeting with a smile the intense gaze directed at me. "A girl with thought enough to formulate an inquiry like that, would not be satisfied with an answer not evolved from her own inner consciousness, I think. I would not venture to substitute my sense of right for yours in a matter like that. But I wonder sometimes if we do not find our highest, most harmonious development in the school of hindrance, after all. We might become a little warped and limited in the process of education that we would work out for ourselves."

"Well, perhaps so," slowly admitted the girl reasoner. "It might be as well to think so after we have decided to submit to become pupils in the school of hindrance."

"Submit?" I questioned, in smilling dissent.

"Oh! of course, that's the wrong word," she responded, quickly. "Submission argues a kind of whining acceptance of the inevitable that is less a grace than open rebellion. But, then, I'm not likely to hug and weep over my sacrifices with any fond or foolish tenderness," she added, laughing. "Don't you think we are talking rather gravely for two merry-hearted girls taking a pleasure drive on a new and improved patent mower, which has swallowed up a goodly portion of my Vassar money?"

"Yes. Why are we not talking with tender confidence of our lovers?" I said. "For Flander gave me to understand that Miss Day had—'a beau.' It seems to me he should have helped you to a solution of the vexed questions you are propounding to yourself. Love is a wonderful revealer of the ways of life."

Miss Day started, with a flush that appeared less the color of love's sweet shame than of surprise and vexation.

"Beg pardon," I added, with swift apology for my impulsive remark. "The words went off themselves."

"That's all right," she responded, brightening, "only you have opened a door to further discussion of my perplexities. No; love has not revealed the way of life to me. The fear grows upon me that it never will. Don't you think we girls make dreadful mistakes in our attachments sometimes? We are so ignorant of the complex relations, and—and—inter-relations involved in a step to which we seem impelled by a sort of necessity, don't you know? For love and—marriage are considered necessities of a woman's life, are they not?"

There was a kind of pathos in the appealing earnestness of the remark that suggested the conscious need of justification for some act that was not satisfying.

"A very good, wise, and beautiful soul once said to me that a true idea of love and marriage is better for us, and better for the world, than a realization that is false and degrading," I answered, without venturing an opinion of my own.

Esther Day laughed again.

"What a barren sort of marriage that would be for the great majority of matter-of-fact people who cannot live on ideas," she said. "The worst of it is, so few of us can get a true idea before we have suffered from the realization of a false one, don't you know? It seems a pity that we have to live our life out before we learn how to live at all."

I shook my head dissentingly. "I am

not certain about that. If we heed it, I think we all have a divine sense of right in those matters which—"

During these remarks Miss Day had turned the course of her horses and was cutting a clean road through the tall, lush grass toward the shore of the little lake shining like molten gold under the low sun, and flashing at the nearest point under the rippling stroke of the boy swimmers darting out from the shadow of the willow copse that had concealed them. Off at the right, on a point of rock commanding a fair view of the surrounding landscape, I had marked, as we turned in this direction, an artist busily sketching, with easel shaded by a huge umbrella, which, just at the middle of my moralizing little speech, was caught from its insecure fastening by a sudden rising breeze and whirled toward the meadow.

On the instant Don, the companion of Prince, stopped short, with dilating eye, upraised head, and expanded nostrils, viewing the soaring object with a snort of fright.

"So! so! it is nothing, my bonny gray," reasoned his mistress gently, but taking a firm grip on the reins. "Gaze at the strange spectacle till you are satisfied that it will not harm you. Don differs from Prince in having his own views of things, quite independent of mine, and an umbrella is always an object of suspicion and terror with him. He can't see the reason of it. There, Don, my boy, the thing is fairly settled. Move on."

"Have you a local artist?" I questioned, my thought recurring to the young gentleman who had attracted Margaret's notice on the train the preceding day.

"Not a native artist, but a stranger boarding in the village above I have observed from time to time stealing bits of my landscape. I'm not sure that I should approve his efforts. But I suppose I cannot arrest him for theft of this sort," Miss Day said, with an eye on the cautious

movements of Don, who still sniffed with vague apprehension.

The artist, meantime, with apparent vexation had laid down his brushes and started in pursuit of the truant umbrella, but, just as he was about to lay hold of it in the little hollow where it had tumbled, a fresh gale of wind caught it up and swept it again in our direction.

Under the renewed threat of danger, Don with a wild snort reared, plunged, and, with swift communication of his fears to Prince, wheeled quite around, in spite of the sawing bit by which Miss Day endeavored, vainly, to check the movement that precipitated us from our seat, flinging her, by force of the reins to which she clung, quite over the cruel knives whereon I fell.

By a marvelous effort, the girl stayed the attempted flight of the horses until two dripping, half-clad youths, flying up from the lake, seized them firmly by the bits. At the same moment the hand of the unlucky umbrella pursuer plucked me from the dangerous position where I had been sternly bidden not to struggle, and I looked up with a sickening sense in the face of the artist, who had somehow won my displeasure the previous day by a

curious attraction of Margaret's interest. Even through my pain, I felt a twinge of shame that this unworthy feeling should rise again.

"Is she badly hurt?" I heard a tense, troubled, yet perfectly quiet voice question, and Miss Day's deadly pale but composed face came between me and the artist's.

"No, indeed," I said, with an effort to rise, but, seeing a reeling movement and a darkening shadow in the earth and sky, I dropped back to my reclining posture, murmuring, "just a little stunned, I think."

"Your knife—slit open that sleeve!" commanded Miss Day; and while the artist deftly fulfilled her orders, she swiftly divested herself of a white skirt and began tearing it into strips.

Whether from sight or loss of blood gushing from the deep cut in my arm I could not say, but, while the two were adjusting the bandages so quickly and marvelously evolved by Miss Day, I felt myself helplessly drifting away into a world vivid and real, leaving behind me a shadowy realm of pain, where my body, like a rent and cast-off cloak, lay under the ministering offices of my late-found friends.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A NEW YEAR'S CARD.

YEAR, New Year, that is to be,
What have you to bring to me?
Sunshine, shadow, good or ill,
Let it be whate'er you will,
But, oh! bring to all I love
Richest blessings from above!

A SCARE.

IT was on a Christmas Eve two or three years ago. I forget which year at the moment, but I know it was not a bit like Christmas weather as it is represented in story-books. There was neither snow nor frost. In our southern suburb fog and mist reigned supreme, and the evergreens, instead of glittering with hoarfrost, hung limp and dripping with moisture.

That was the appearance outside; but inside our artistic Queen Anne house it was delightfully warm and cheery. I never think it is any economy to begrudge fires in such weather. Better an extra ton of coal than a doctor's bill. So fires blazed everywhere from the early morning.

"Hang the key out as usual, pet, if I am after ten," said Tom, as I helped him into his big ulster that miserably damp day.

"O Tom!" I exclaimed, "it is Christmas Eve."

"I know, dear; but unfortunately people *will* have newspapers on Christmas Day, and I'm afraid I may be a good deal later than usual to-night."

I pouted, of course. What wife would not? But then I thought of the nice fat turkey hanging in my larder, and the half-dozen plum-puddings at that moment boiling merrily on the kitchen fire. Tom is *so* fond of Christmas pudding; we always make enough to last us well into the new year. So I reflected philosoph-

ically on the hundreds of unemployed who had no turkey or plum-pudding, to say nothing of mince-pies.

The day passed quickly, spite of the gloom outside. Tots and I decorated all the rooms with holly and mistletoe, and pricked our fingers, and were very dirty and happy. Tots is our little four-year old girl—the core of both our hearts. She insisted on decorating her father's study after her own designs, and I let her have her way. I knew it would be far more beautiful in his eyes than a much more orthodox arrangement. Tots was rather sad that she could not put some carrots and cauliflowers about the room, as she had seen them a few weeks before at a Harvest Thanksgiving; but I pacified her with two or three apples and tomatoes, which were arranged in a very original way round the inkstand, which she informed me was the font.

No one called all day; who that could help it would go out into such a damp and depressing atmosphere? But the postman brought endless greetings from the outside world; and after the last batch had been dropped into the letter-box, I heard the maids locking the front-door before taking the key round to its hiding-place. Our Queen Anne house, of course, had a country front-door with a handle that turned from the outside, and no latch-keys. So we had a hiding-place for the key outside when Tom was late.

I meant to sit up for him this Christ-

mas Eve, unless he was very late, or I got quite too sleepy. So when my two maids were gone to bed, I went up to my room and took off my dress, and put on the crimson wrapper with a pale-pink silk front that Tom was so fond of, and loosened my hair. I thought it would refresh me and wake me up, and I should be part ways toward bed when Tom did come. Tots was sleeping soundly in her cot beside my bed, her golden hair ruffled about her rosy face, one dimpled hand clutching a white fur "bunny," that was her constant bed-fellow.

I watched her soft, quiet breathing for a few minutes, and then, with a heart full of gratitude for my happiness, I went down to the dining-room, where a bright fire was glowing, and the lamp was burning brightly. In the fender Tom's supper of stewed kidneys was keeping nice and hot, and smelling most deliciously. Suddenly it occurred to me that he would certainly like some cider for his supper.

I did not much like the idea of descending to the cellar for it; but, however, I must either do that or wait until Tom arrived, and it would be so much nicer to have everything quite ready. So I lighted a candle, and screwed up my courage.

Our house was all on two floors—the kitchen was on a level with the dining-room, and there was nothing below but two coal-cellars.

I unlocked the cellar door, and with my heart beating somewhat more quickly than usual, plunged down the steep, dark stairs. The coal-cellar was in front of me, and another cellar to the right. When I reached the bottom of the stairs, I put my candle down on the stairs, and turned into the cellar. I knew exactly where to put my hand upon the cider-jug I wanted; but I wished to gather my pretty wrapper up before entering. As I was engaged in doing this, I kept a vigilant eye on the door of the coal-cellar. I had a

lurking fear in my heart that some one might be hidden in there, and would suddenly pounce on me and blow out my candle; but I never once thought of danger from above, and my heart turned to stone as I heard the key gently turned in the door at the head of the stairs.

One terrified glance up the stairs told me the horrid truth.

The door was shut fast!

I had left it wide open, that I might see the hall-light as I went up again. Women's brains work quickly, and in a moment I had grasped the awful situation. Over and over again friends had warned me that I should have a tramp or a burglar getting into the house by the drawing-room window.

It was a window opening to the ground, at the back of the house, and had neither shutters nor special fastenings. Access to the garden from the back was easy. I had always scoffed at the idea, and now it had actually happened.

The wretch must have watched me go down the cellar stairs, and then locked the door, and the whole house was at his mercy.

All this flashed like lightning through my mind.

And my Tots—my sleeping darling! Mothers, think of it, at this man's mercy! There was a fire in our bedroom, and he could not fail to see her; and even if he left her unhurt, if she awoke, he would frighten her into fits.

I was frantic, but must act instantly. It was useless to scream down there; no one would hear me but the burglar himself.

The servants slept in a room built off a passage, half-way up the stairs. They would never hear anything, and if they did, would only go into hysterics probably. No; I must help myself, and save my darling myself.

All this takes long to tell, but it took less than a hundred seconds to pass

through my mind; and then came the solution of my difficulty—The coal-cellar window.

In the coal-cellar was a small wooden door, or window rather, through which the coals were put. It opened on to the side garden by the kitchen door, and was kept open by day, but bolted at night.

Two seconds after remembering this window, I was on the top of the coals dragging madly at its bolt, heedless of my dainty kid slippers, my still more dainty hands and pink-silk front.

Cook had a hook on a pole for unboltting and opening this window, but I could not stop for that. I tore at it with my hands like a wild thing, and, kneeling on the moist coals, forced open the window and squeezed myself desperately through the narrow aperture, reckless of everything but the one thought that my golden-haired Tots was at the absolute mercy of a black-masked burglar!

Once out of the house, I flew on the wings of a mother's love through the garden and up the road. Thank Heaven! there were two policemen coming slowly toward me.

I could scarcely gasp out my words when I reached them. Fortunately one of them recognized me, or they would have taken me up as a lunatic or worse.

They returned with me quickly to the house. The burglar did not know we had the front-door key outside. We should catch him beautifully. Heaven grant my darling was safe!

I flew to the hiding-place.

The key was gone!

I turned a face of awful despair to the two men; but at that moment the front door was thrown wide open, and Tom stepped quickly out.

The relief was too great. For the first and only time in my life I fainted dead, and those two policemen saved me from falling.

* * * * *

When I opened my eyes again, I was lying on the sofa, which was drawn close up to the dining-room fire, and Tom was kneeling beside me, bathing my face.

I felt dizzy and odd.

"Where is he?" I asked, feebly.

"Who?"

"That burglar, of course. Did you catch him? Is Tots safe?"

"You unutterably foolish little thing—I was the burglar!"

"TOM!"

The surprise cured me completely. I sat right up, and forgot all about being faint. Then, as I caught sight of my ruined wrapper and smutty hands, and my poor scratched, sodden slippers, I realized what an absolute ninny I had been, and I could only hide my face on Tom's shoulder, and laugh hysterically.

Tom did not know whether to laugh at me, or to scold me, or to be sorry for me; so he did a little of all three, and tried to smooth my tangled yellow locks (some of which were found next morning on the bolt of the coal-cellar window), whilst he told me what a silly, impulsive little woman I was, and described very graphically the figure I cut being carried in, black and bedraggled, by the two policemen. Then he tried to wipe some of the coal-dust off my face with his hand-kerchief, but only made matters worse; so I said I would run up-stairs and wash my face and hands, and put on a fresh wrapper whilst he fetched up the jug of cider.

The fact was, I was longing to see, with my own eyes, that my lovely Tots was safe. And when I had seen her, just as I had left her, clasping her dear bunny, I was content, and went down, clean and comfortable once more, to share Tom's supper.

* * * * *

I never could understand how it was that I had not heard Tom come in. I

always heard his first step on the gravel before he closed the garden gate. He says I must have acted with mad and headlong haste, for he only locked the cellar-door for a minute whilst he took off his ulster; and then, finding I didn't appear, and didn't seem to appreciate the joke, he went to look for me, found me gone, and, before

he could get up again to the front door, I was there with the policemen.

He says I should make a splendid journalist, I am so prompt and energetic. I daresay. But the general public is not my Tots. One must have a strong incentive to be energetic over a heap of wet coals.

BITS FROM A DIARY.

“SEPTEMBER 25th, 1868. Twenty-five years old to-day. Yet I do not feel old; not as old, I think, as I did when sixteen. Perhaps because then I felt a little uncertain as to whether I was still a child or had advanced to young-ladyhood. I have now, at least, arrived at an age when that question no longer exists; there is no possibility of my being mistaken for a little girl now. I have been very ill. Am able once more to get about the house a little, and watch mother as she busies herself about her daily duties. It is so delightful to be up again. When I can help mother in her tasks I shall feel, I think, quite happy again. We are so used to living all alone, mother and I, that it almost seems as though we had always lived so. We are neither of us very strong, so we spend our time in taking thought for and care of each other. In this blessed interchange of care-taking we find our purest and sweetest joys. We live very quietly, nothing very exciting ever comes to us. I dare not think how this quiet peacefulness may one day be broken, although it almost forces itself upon me sometimes when mother's footsteps sound more than usually slow and languid, and when I notice her increasing tendency to grow easily weary.

“October 20th. We had an opportunity to attend Meeting to-day. It is too far for us to walk, so we do not get

there very often. Mother encouraged me to go, and I am glad I went, for it has done me good. It has been such a lovely day. The trees are dressed in all their autumn splendor, and the atmosphere had that peculiar golden haze, seen only in the fall, when one might imagine all the golden riches of the earth were given us to breathe. How mother laughed when I told her how warmly I was greeted. One dear old lady, wishing to make me welcome, yet not quite certain as to the identity of the one she wished to set at ease, said, kissing me, and pressing my hand warmly, ‘How is thee? I’m very glad to see thee. And—who is thee?’ I don’t remember a word of the preaching. I often wonder why it would not be well to have, sometimes, a service that consists of the reading of choice selections.

“October 21st. There is so little to write about in this quiet life of ours. We rise and we go to bed, we walk a little, talk a little, work a little, eat a little, read and think a little. At times I feel as though I were in a stagnant state, was like a machine that is wound up and runs regularly for a certain length of time. But it is not so with mother. She seems to bring some originality of thought, some earnest and true and hearty purpose into everything she says and does. She would develop and expand under any circumstances. Her life has been full of

care. I am so glad that toward its close we can, by strict economy, enable her to have a resting spell, a resting on the oars—I do not like the looks of those words now they are written—resting on the oars—for what? I can see her sitting and sewing as I write, her pale, spiritual face, which is deeply furrowed by care and work, still wears such a look of victory, of peace, that it is like a blessing to be able to look upon it. And yet it is so pale; it almost frightens me, at times, it looks so white and colorless. Surely God will be merciful and not separate us. She is all to me, all that I have.

“October 22d. We went out yesterday into the woods and gathered autumn leaves; strolling or resting, talking or being silent as we chose, and as only two people can who understand and love each other. How mother does love the woods! she worships them as truly as ever the most devout have worshiped before any costly shrine.

“October 30th. I have sometimes wished that we lived right among Friends (Quakers), but none of our neighbors, though they they are most kind and friendly, belong to our Meeting. The Quakers are such a simple, quiet, unostentatious people; I should have loved them, I think, even if mother had not belonged to them. There is a charm connected with them even in the very ways in which they differ from the ‘world’s people.’ They have won respect for themselves as a society by their uprightness, their simplicity, and truthfulness, their loyalty to their consciences and to their love of right and of peace, and, most of all, I sometimes think, by their kindness of spirit. Sometimes, indeed, I feel inclined to murmur against the strength of their self-repression, and to long for more impulsive action and speech; but I remind myself of their steadfast, trustful, ‘staying’ qualities, and cease my scarcely admitted censure.

“November 25th. I think I have read somewhere that in this life we only have

‘hintings’ of the real life; only the preparatory studies and discipline to prepare us for the higher existence that is our ‘birthright.’ Once in awhile, I fancy, we catch glimpses of what real life and happiness might be, so as to give us heart and courage to keep on, and, also, to help mellow the soil for the seed that is to be sown. Mother’s voice is saying, ‘Sarah, don’t thee think we had better go out into the sunlight a little while, these pleasant days will not visit us much longer this fall.’ Mother’s ‘don’t thee think thee had better’ is just as much something to be obeyed by me now as it was when I was a child. I believe I never have outgrown the feeling children generally have that their parents must know everything. At all events, I am always sure that if mother thinks anything to be best that it must in truth be so.

“November 30th. ‘Go out into the sunlight.’ The words are constantly recurring to me. We can and ought to go out into the sunlight and we are the better for it; it is a necessity of our being. But there must also be ‘sunlight in the heart.’ Our deepest, truest, and most precious treasures come through our affections. But even of these we are careless. We are so hurried and so selfish that we fail to cultivate and to cherish those things that are in reality our dearest possessions, our heart’s real sunlight. How careless we often are! I wonder what will be the penalty for the sins of omission.

“December 23d. Mother is trying to encourage me to undertake the care of a little motherless cousin. ‘Thee may find a deal of comfort in a little child,’ she says, gently. I knew what she meant, but I could not, would not own it; sitting here now and hearing her cough, cough, I knew what she meant. Of course, the little girl shall come, and—oh! I cannot face it.

“January 5th. Mother is still bravely in her place about the house, but, oh! so feeble. She looked at me so tenderly a

while ago and said 'dear child, if it were not for thee I should be so glad to go.'

"June 10th, 1869. Five months since last I saw her living face. Five months since they told me she was dead. I did not believe it, it was too cruel! I could not believe it! But when the days dragged slowly on without her voice, I came to know my desolation, to know what it was to be alone. I was not submissive then—I am not now. I would have her back if I could, or—I would go to her. I prayed wildly for death, I could not pray for strength or comfort. I could not see how a merciful Providence could take her and leave me so utterly alone. They told me that it was natural for parents to go before their children. But that was not comfort! They told me that she gave me up at last, and was willing and anxious to go. She was willing to go, I know it; but, she wanted to take me with her, I know that, too. I was stunned, dumb, in my desolation, and they thought I ought to be made to cry and mourn. I could not cry. It seemed as though the fountain of tears was burned dry. I could not talk about it, and that they said was 'very unreasonable.' I would talk of other things, when I must, but not of that. I attended to the duties of the house, attended to the child—and wished they would let me alone. I could not be comforted by rule, and I could not talk or be talked to about it. No one knew what to say—no one ever does. Perhaps it *was* unreasonable. I know they meant to be kind—meant only to be kind—I feel that truth now more than I did then.

"June 11th. I could see no possible life for me without her. Whenever I slept I dreamed of her—I do still—I dreamed of her every night, so vividly that I would feel, on waking, as though she had actually been with me. I have felt so often that it would be such a comfort if I could only see her one little half-hour, if I could tell her so many things I

wanted to say but could not at the last. There are so many things I would be glad to undo, and so many more that I wish I had done—but it is all over now; nothing more can be said or done—there is only this heavy, unendurable silence and loneliness left me.

"June 15th. I felt so rebellious when I saw the grass sending up its slender, gleaming spears; it did not seem as though the world could, or as though it ought to grow green and blossoming and beautiful again. Yet I think the gradual unfolding of the spring life was really almost the first thing that did me good. It seemed as though with the tender budding there was a tender voice whispering faintly in my inmost heart, leading me to a dim perception and thought of the 'green fields and pastures new,' and of the blissful peace and rest that might be found beside them."

"August, 1888. I have been reading over my old diary. The feeling with which it was written still thrills me. It is nearly twenty years since my loved mother slept—no, wakened with God. For nearly twenty years she and other of God's messengers have often visited me in sleep, bringing to me the companionship, the sustaining, the love that I needed. For nearly twenty years have I been glad that for her 'the stone was rolled away from the tomb, death conquered and life triumphant.' Daily and hourly have I thanked the mercy of the Father that she could not foresee what life was to be for me. I thank Him that, while I have walked in darkness, she has dwelt in the fullness of light; that while I was bowed and staggering under the cross of life she was wearing its crown. May the reflection of the light about her rest upon the clouds that shadow my rough and narrow pathway until in its strength they may be dispersed, and through the rift the well-known voice shall whisper the call of the Master to 'come up higher!'"

MARY FERGUSON.



THE CURSE OF TRACADIE.

BY

MARIAN C. L. REEVES.

Author of "A Little Maid of Acadie," "Old Martin Boscowen's Jeet," "Pilot Fortune," etc.

CHAPTER I.

"All my gold is in the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather."

"COME must, come will!" says the girl, with a fine little air of resignation, and acquiescence in the old saying.

She is sitting on the edge of the cliff, tossing, now and then, a bit of loosened stone into the sea below: seeming so absorbed in her occupation as to be unconscious of her lover's glowering looks, as he stands over her.

"And you don't care, Virgine?"

She leans forward, trying to see how far her last stone went, before she turns to answer him.

"Did I say I did not care? But I think not. Only Monsieur must not expect me to make *grand eas* of a bit of a summer voyage with the fishing-boats. If Monsieur wishes to go—"

"Speak English, Virgine," says the young man, irritably: his own voice has a strong Scotch accent in it. "Monsieur is ridiculous enough with Macniel. Besides, you have promised to call me Niel. And you know it is not that I wish to go. But the school pays me so little—"

"And without bread and wine, love is nothing? Pardon me for the French proverb," she says demurely: "but I suppose you don't wish me to forget everything of our own, since you have taught

me the English so well? After all, though, I fancy I've heard an English equivalent. Let me see: oh! yes: 'When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.'"

Niel Macniel flushes angrily, half turning away. Then suddenly stoops and catches the girl by both hands, firmly, drawing her to her feet.

"Virgine, you do not mean it?—answer me that! You do not mean you doubt my love: you are not sure beyond all doubt that nothing but my love for you could make me leave you?"

The two pairs of eyes are almost on a level as he bends above her, and she does not lower hers, clear and brown, and alive with lights and shadows like the hurrying little rivers of her northern land. The thoughts flash through those brown depths, changefully. She draws a long, deep breath, almost a sigh.

"I cannot doubt you, Niel. I doubt myself."

"Yourself?"

He looks at her with angry distrust.

"Explain yourself, Virgine. That fellow, old Donect—"

In the cove that breaks the cliff to the left, as they stand there, Niel can see where Donect's two-masted trawler has just come in, and busy fishermen are unloading a big fare of cod at the small pier. The drying cod are covering the "fish-flakes," the horizontal lattices on props that edge the low ground at the

cove. Above Niel, where the table-land stretches away from the brow of the cliff, to the belt of woods against the sunset sky, old Doncet's fields give a broad hint of plenty and golden harvests to come, when all the summer shall have spent itself in ripening them. Old Doncet's house peers out of the trees with clean white face, and a fine show of red roofs, and old Doncet's house, every one knows (and Virgine Painchand best of all), is wanting a mistress.

"Explain yourself, Virgine. That fellow, old Doncet—"

"Speak of the wolf and you'll see his tail," says Virgine, under her breath.

For she has turned, at a step behind them: a step unheard until then, on the springy turf.

She draws herself away from Macniel; a gleam of defiance comes into her eyes.

She has spoken too low to be heard either by Macniel or by the grim old man who stands measuring the two from head to foot, with lowering glances from under those gray-thatched penthouse brows of his.

He is scowling at Virgine as he leans sideways under the weight of his fish-basket, ribbed and yellow-brown, like a huge halved melon. The girl, with one of her swift changes of compunction, puts out her hand to help him with his load.

"Let me take one side, grandpère," she says, in French.

He gives it up to her, ungraciously enough. But still he gives it and moves on with her, by way of taking her out of harm's reach and Niel Macniel's, to whom he does not vouchsafe a sign of recognition.

"Doncet gave them—fresh from his last haul," old Painchand flings back as he goes, knowing the words will reach young Macniel like a blow.

But the girl flings something over her grandfather's shoulder, too—a swift, deprecating glance which might very well

soften the blow to her lover as he stands to watch the lithe young figure pass on by the cliff-path till the cresting firs snatch her from sight.

It is just at this moment that old Painchand breaks the silence again.

"Doncet—" he begins.

But the girl, pausing on a ledge of rock that overhangs the sheer descent into the sea, looks dangerous. She grasps the basket as if minded to overturn it into the sea.

"Enough, grandpère: I'll not hear any more of Doncet than his name just, and that as little as may be. If he chooses to give you his fish, the old miser, *bon*, only it must be understood you do not pay for them with *me*."

Painchand scowls at her again: but he knows by experience that Virgine is not to be terrified into submission. He is too glad to have her strong young arm to bear most of his burdens, to drive her from him at this moment with the abusive words he knows so well—none better—how to pour out on her when occasion serves.

The westering sun is throwing a broad, golden bridge from cliff to cliff, as they descend. The white curves of surf are breaking in showers against the sheer red sandstone wall of Cape Egmont and its outlying bastion.

This green Prince Edward Island stands on a red base of sandstone in the blue Gulf of St. Lawrence, "Anchored on the Wave," according to its Indian name. To the west and south the shores of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia lie like a faint blue cloud-bank on the horizon. They loom now over so bright a summer sea that it is difficult to imagine how for months and months of the long winter this province-island is absolutely cut off from the mainland by a polar-sea of drifting ice which even the strong winter steamers cannot cross. Yet to Virgine's eyes, as she stands gazing out seaward, that wintry waste is very real and present. She is thinking how it will be,

if Niel should not come back to her from this summer cruise of his.

Would it not be better for him that he should not come back to her? What was she, that her love could make easy the hard hand-to-hand struggle with poverty which marrying her would force him into?

As she told him, she is not sure of herself: not sure whether she could bear the change in him which would be certain to grow out of that hand-to-hand struggle.

For what else but that has made grand-père Painchand at once cruel and servile, overbearing to herself and the grand'mère, and ready to follow cringing in the wake of rich old Doncet?

Her heart cries out that Niel could never come to that. But then her reason tells her that the grand'mère—whom Virgine is so like—must have said the same thing to herself years ago.

Virgine turns her back on the poor cottage standing bleak and weatherbeaten on the stony hillside, with its scant, unpromising potato-patch. She lets Painchand go in alone, while she lingers behind, to think the matter out.

She stands leaning with arms folded on the topmost rail of the ragged fence, watching with vague eyes the dying out of the crimson glory in the clouds and the "sullen roar" pressing in heavy masses up and up until a storm is threatening.

The gloom seems to be creeping over the girl's own life, blotting out all the brightness.

Far away, over the hill, gayly twinkle the lights of the village. Niel is there, and Niel will have her with him.

Yes: when the first drops of the rain begin to fall heavy and slow, Virgine's mind is made up. She goes in-doors: but only for a time, she tells herself; only until such time as Niel shall take her home his wife.

It is this thought that brings the dazzle into her eyes, the flickering color to her

cheeks when she pushes the door open into the dim, smoky-raftered kitchen.

The driftwood fire smouldering in the wide chimney does not attempt much in the way of lighting up, though it is all the light there is.

Madame Painchand has carried off the lamp into the weaving-room adjoining: Virgine can see her moving to and fro, putting in the warp for the new piece of checkered linen to be begun to-morrow.

She has left the truant's supper toasting in the ashes: a couple of roast potatoes and a tempting bit of broiled fish. It does not appear to tempt Virgine, however, for she pushes it contemptuously aside with her foot as she stands on the hearth breaking open a potato.

It is a frugal enough meal, and she does not care to move to find the salt which might have given it some savor. She forgets not only that, but the potato cooling in her hand. Her attention has strayed to the old man leaning back in his big chair, in the chimney-corner opposite.

It is not often that Virgine can look him in the face without some taunt being flung as it were into hers.

But now his head has sunk back on the cushion which Virgine had stuffed with the drowsy white everlasting-flowers. He is fast asleep.

Not so fast, however, as to be past dreaming.

Under the intent gaze she unconsciously fixes on him, he moves restlessly up on his pillow, murmuring unintelligibly to himself.

The girl's eyes soften as she watches him.

How hollow and dark and sunken are his closed eyes; what lines of pain are graven in the gray, set face; how worn and empty are the greedy, clutching hands that open and shut aimlessly as they lie upturned, each on an arm of his chair.

How he must have suffered to have come to this!

She has never thought of that before, only of how the grand'mère has suffered.

But he!

She goes down on her knees beside him; she lays her soft, flushed cheek close to his hand, only not touching him; she says, but quite silently, in her heart, not to risk awaking him:

"Grandpère, I've been hard and cruel to you in my heart: hard and cruel—"

What is that, that stops the very breath upon her lips: that turns them white and trembling?

It is only the old man's murmuring—murmuring—

So close as she kneels to him, she must catch a word here and there, that is not unintelligible.

Only a word here and there. But when presently she hears her grandmother moving about in the weaving-room, she rises up hastily but noiselessly, and goes in to her, pulling the door to, without a sound, behind her.

Madame Painchand, who has not observed that last action of hers, hardly glances up from the flax she is sorting.

"*Bon nous y voici!* Thou wilt be coming in to supper to-morrow morning, soon. But the supper has a warm nook of its own, before the kitchen-fire. Something better than just *patates*, this time, little one: a good mouthful of fish—"

"Old Doncet's! As if I would touch anything of old Doncet's!" the girl flashes out.

The grandmother does glance up at her now. The lamp from the shelf above the loom at which she is sitting, shines down on the two faces, and shows how wonderfully alike they are. The old woman might look into Virgine's, as into the glass of her own past, and see what she was once: the young woman is looking as if into the glass of her future, and saying to herself that this is what she will be, if the coming years are heavy

with the gloom that seems gathering about them now.

But Madame Painchand has become conscious of something new and unfamiliar in Virgine's face.

"How you are shivering, my child. Are you cold?" [She calls it *frète*.] "Go then in to the fire. You may stir it up a little if you like: for neighbor Donecet has sent a load of wood over—"

Virgine cuts her short, with a haughty lifting of her head. "Donecet! always Donecet!"

"And you may go farther and fare worse, silly child that you are! Or you may wither up here in the chimney-corner, stale with waiting for your great gawk of a schoolmaster: Painchand, *pain chanci*!"

The mention of Niel has given Virgine courage to speak: though it has made her paler than before.

"Grand'mère—" she says abruptly, though sinking her voice—"Grand'mère, what does my grandfather mean when he raves of blood—blood—the fearful taint—and Tracadie?"

Madame Painchand literally sways in her seat at the loom. She puts up her hands as if to ward off a blow; then catches hold of the side of the loom to steady herself.

"Tracadie!" She repeats that last word in a hoarse whisper. "Tracadie!"

Virgine presses the question:

"What does he mean by it, grand'mère? Why should he murmur those words over in his sleep, over and over?"

The old woman tries desperately hard to recover herself, to make as though there was nothing to recover from, indeed.

"Why shouldn't he?" she asks, with an assumption of carelessness, which proves rather a failure. "What is there in a dream? One cannot take people to task for a dream."

But the girl put her two hands on the old woman's shoulders, as she stands over her, constrainingly.

"Grand'mère, Tracadie [I know we came from New Brunswick, though it was before I can remember]—Tracadie is the New Brunswick lazaretto for the leprosy among our people. It is there the lepers among our people are gathered together in the convents, that *the taint of blood* may not spread among us other Acadians. Grand'mère, *how did my father and my mother die?*"

The grandmother is staring up at her with a dazed look in her eyes.

Slowly, as if her limbs failed under her, Virgine has sunk upon her knees, her hands still upon the grandmother's shoulders.

"Grand'mère—" in a hoarse, thick whisper—"is *that* what it all means? Is that why you would never tell me how or where my father and my mother died? Is that why you bade me, as a little one, never to name my father or my mother to the grandfather? Is that why my grandfather, sleeping safely in his chair before the kitchen-fire yonder, is shivering and turning restlessly, and moaning about the taint of blood—and Tracadie—about the horror of the death—and how Virgine must never, never know how her father and her mother died? Grand'mère, are we *lepers*?"

The grandmother is still staring at her, as one fascinated and under some deadly spell. Her lips move, once or twice; then she says, speaking with difficult utterance:

"How can you say such things, child? You know that I am well and strong; the grandfather is well; and you look at my hands: look at your own—the leprosy will show itself in the hands, you know."

She is holding up the girl's strong, shapely one, between her own two trembling hands, as if to prove the falsity of such a suspicion.

But Virgine breaks in with a bitter, mocking laugh: "I know. Unfortunately, I also know that leprosy has a way of skipping a generation. You and

the grandfather free—I too. But what becomes of your children—and mine, if I were wicked enough to marry?"

Madame Painchand pushes the girl aside: she starts up, and goes to the door, listening, as if she feared an interruption.

Virgine, rising up where she has left her, the hot color burning in her cheeks, her eyes ablaze as she holds out her hands in the lamplight, turning them about, as if to find the fatal plague-spot on them—Virgine says, clearly and distinctly:

"I *will* know what it means! I'll not give up all that makes life worth living, for an old man's empty dream. But it is no dream!"—letting her hands fall together, with a shudder. "It has some terrible meaning, if not this. And I *will* know it."

Over the old face turned toward the door there comes a subtle change. As some wild creature of the woods turns to defend its helpless young so she turns to defend the helpless old man who, but for her, might have his guilty secret torn from him.

"The saints forgive me for the lie!" she says: and goes straight with it to Virgine.

"Why should you give up all that makes life worth living, child? It's never a wife old Doncelet wants, but a nurse—"

Virgine interrupts her with a proud gesture.

"And we *are* lepers, grand'mère? That is what it all means?"

Madame Painchand bows down her head on her hands. "The saints forgive me for the lie!" she says again, in her heart, but acts it all the same.

When she looks up again it is at the sound of the side door opening out into the night.

She throws a startled glance around: but breathes more freely when she finds that the girl has taken with her a shawl that was hanging against the wall.

"If she were quite desperate she would not care to defend herself against the

night-air. She has gone out to think the matter over. The poor little one! But perhaps it may come right. At any rate, she'll send the schoolmaster away, and maybe she'll be mistress of Doncet's house in the end. At least it has put us on our guard. No more dreams for my man when there is any one but me to overhear."

As she pushes the middle door softly open and goes in to keep guard over him, her handsome old face, gray and haggard with pain, the girl who is so like her—the girl whom she would fain have spared, if to spare her, were not to risk harming "my man"—has groped her way out

into the darkness and is leaning once more, with arms folded, on the top-rail of the ragged fence about the garden-patch.

The clouds are heavy as before, and now and then a sullen rain-drop is still falling.

Virgine, with eyes accustomed to the light within-doors, can see nothing about her, only now and again the white crest of a wave breaking in the distance.

She herself is in the line of lamplight that streams out through the uncurtained window of the weaving-room. Some one comes out of the darkness and says to her:

"Virgine—"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MISS LONELY'S STAR.

"DEAR, dear!" sighed Miss Lonely, "it's very hard, I'm sure; them that can, don't want to, and them that want to, can't. I suppose the Lord will judge us poor creatures by the opportunities we have had, but I can't think of an opportunity I ever had to win a star. Maybe the Lord will say, 'Lonely, opportunities are made;' I know that too, but it's slow of speech I always have been and always will be."

Miss Lonely got up from her low seat by the fire and, taking the large family Bible from its stand, resumed her place.

"Come, Jacob," she said.

Jacob aroused himself from his nap, and lazily stretching first one paw and then the other, walked over to Miss Lonely's chair and sitting down by her side looked expectantly up into her face while she read aloud a chapter, and in a quavering voice sang one of David's Psalms.

It was Miss Lonely's intense desire for companionship that had led her to train

Jacob, the great Maltese cat, to take a place at her side each night while she kept up the solitary family worship.

The chapter Miss Lonely chose for her evening reading was one which led her thoughts to a subject she had often pondered upon—the fear that she alone of all the host of the redeemed might wear a starless crown. Her life was drawing to a close, and had she ever led a soul to Christ, or helped some one to a knowledge of a better life, was a question Miss Lonely asked herself over and over.

To-night she seemed unusually depressed.

"It's all along of our names," she mused; "there's lots in a name, let folks say what they will. Dessie felt it before she died, and now I feel her share and my own too. Our names kind of shut us off from folks, until we have grown away from the whole world, and what chance is there to win a star, when folks feel lonesome just to hear tell of you?"

The gathering tear in Miss Lonely's

eye rolled slowly down over her faded cheek and fell on Jacob's face as he sat on her knee; he suddenly jumped down and curled himself up on his comfortable cushion.

"There, there," said Miss Lonely, "I believe the creature is gettin' the feelin', too."

The fire was raked down, the bolt slipped into place over the door, and Miss Lonely forgot her trouble in sleep.

A good many years had passed since Mrs. Bliss had presented her husband, in addition to his already large family, with twin daughters. It was not a joyful event in the family, and Mr. Bliss, wishing to give expression to the gloom which pervaded the household, yet loth to depart from the prevailing custom of naming children Joy, Hope, Faith, etc., christened the twins Lonely and Desolate.

In the passing years Lonely and Desolate had found that there was "lots in a name," as Miss Lonely expressed it. It had taken much of the joy out of their childhood and girlhood; and, as time rolled on, and one by one of the family died, and they were left sole occupants of the little old farm-house, the rays of gloom which had shadowed their younger days deepened, and they withdrew more and more within themselves, until Miss Desolate died, leaving Miss Lonely sole possessor of shadow and farm-house.

There were few visitors to the Bliss farm, and of them all, Miss Lonely could think of no one, save the boy who brought her milk, but were "professors," and attended divine worship in the bare little church in the nearest village.

If Miss Lonely was to win a star for her crown, it must be the milk-boy, so she decided, and she watched him the next morning with much perturbation as he came up the path, swinging his milk-pail and answering the black-bird's call, with the overflowing spirits which only a crisp autumn morning can give.

Cyrus, the milk-boy, seldom saw Miss

Lonely, he deposited the milk in a crock, took the bit of pasteboard which answered for a ticket, and departed as he came; but this morning he was surprised to have Miss Lonely meet him at the door, and still more so when she seemed disposed to talk.

The curtains were drawn, and, in spite of the streak of sunshine which came in through the door Cyrus had left open, he stopped his cheery whistle.

"Good mornin'," said Miss Lonely, brightly, "this is a wonderful spell of weather we're havin'."

"Yes'm," answered Cyrus, hastily emptying the milk and catching up the ticket.

"I think it most likely we will have snow before long, though," said Miss Lonely.

"Yes'm," repeated Cyrus, half-way through the door.

"Stop, Cyrus," implored Miss Lonely, "there's somethin' I want to say to you."

Cyrus stopped, and the startled expression in his eyes did not encourage Miss Lonely.

"It's about your soul, Cyrus," she faltered.

He looked down at his bare toes protruding from his worn shoe, purple and spotted from the frosty air, then with flashing eyes at the troubled face in the doorway.

"I can't help it," he said, angrily, "mother'll get me a new pair when she can. I don't see that it's any one's business, either," and in an instant he was far down the path.

Poor Miss Lonely!

When Cyrus's meaning dawned upon her, she sank into the nearest chair. The color faded from her cheek, leaving it ghastly with the pain tugging at her heart-strings.

"It's no use," said she, at last, "I aint born for it."

There were no tears, the blow was too deep for that. As is sometimes the case,

it had the effect of arousing a spirit of determination which had lain dormant all these years, and she went about her simple housework, turning over and over in her mind what effort she could next make. The bright spots in her cheeks told how determined she was.

What could she do that would make Cyrus understand her real meaning?

She planned just what she would say, and went to bed somewhat comforted for the failure of the morning.

With beating heart she waited for his coming, and summoning all her courage opened the door, only to find he had sent a younger brother in his place.

Intentionally or not, the disappointment was the same to Miss Lonely.

The failure of her hopes, and the almost oppressive Indian summer weather, combined to make Miss Lonely listless, and, as she sat by the open window one late October afternoon, the sun brought out distinctly the lines upon her face, which seemed to have multiplied in the last weeks, and made her thin, light hair faded and lifeless instead of giving it a golden hue.

Her eyes wandered from the late autumn flowers, which the frost had treated tenderly, to the religious newspaper she held in her hands.

It might have been the thoughts of her flowers which caused her attention to fasten on a report of the work done by a flower mission in one of the great cities.

Her heart gave a faint throb of hope. Here was something she could do, where her name and faltering tongue would be no disadvantage; but in an instant she remembered that if she had the flowers, there was no one sick in that neighborhood to send them to. She laid the paper away, however, with the feeling that sometime she might find use for it.

It was at church on the following Sunday that she overheard a few words of the village doctor in answer to a question, and again her pulses fluttered with hope.

"No, not so busy as might be expected this unseasonable weather. A bad case of fever up in the lumber-camp keeps me traveling pretty often in that direction."

Here at last was Miss Lonely's chance, and she hurried home to get out the paper and see what was done when flowers were sent to the sick.

It was pleasant work to select the text which she found must accompany the flowers, and the most delightful Sunday she had known for some time passed quickly away.

Would the long-delayed frost come that night was the question which perplexed her, and her mind vibrated feverishly from the desire to pick the few flowers and save them, to the fear that in so doing she would break the fourth Commandment.

Monday came clear and bright, and with it Miss Lonely to gather the flowers from her tiny garden. It would have been a pathetic sight had any one been there to see it. The worn little spinster, with anxious care written in every line of her face, gathering and arranging the few old-fashioned flowers which, next to Jacob, held the largest share of her heart.

The walk to the lumber-camp was a long one, and many times before she arrived at her destination, her heart failed her, but with the knowledge that it was her last opportunity, she kept bravely on.

Fortunately she reached the camp while the men were at work in the woods, and she found no one but the sick man and the cook. She had taken the precaution to bring a custard with her, and it served as an introduction to open the way for the flowers and text.

During her long walk, Miss Lonely had pictured what the man might do on receiving the message from the Bible. It might awaken long-forgotten memories of home and mother, and before leaving she might see some fruit from her labor of love. So it was with a keen sense of disappointment that she laid the text and

flowers on the pillow of the man tossing restlessly to and fro with the fever.

"It's very kind of you, missis," said the cook as he received the custard from Miss Lonely's trembling fingers, "'taint often such victuals gits to a lumber-camp, nor flowers, nuther. I'll tell Jem when he gits to know somethin', about you, and he'll be obliged, I'm sure."

Somewhat comforted, Miss Lonely returned home.

The long-delayed snow-storm came that night, and as she stood by the window watching the trees bend before the wind, and the snow making little mounds where her flowers had so lately bloomed, Miss Lonely felt a thrill of thankfulness.

"It does seem that the Lord just waited till I had them flowers picked," she said to Jacob, who stood on the table rubbing against her and purring softly.

The winter set in with its storms, and if Miss Lonely had any idea of hearing of the result of her flowers, she gave it up now, and shut off more than ever from the outside world, resigned herself to the Lord's will, saying to Jacob:

"It's all right somehow, or the Lord wouldn't have set me down so hard here that I never could get away."

She was startled one morning in the early spring by a neighbor driving his sleigh close to her door, over the snow drifts, and calling out in a cheery voice as he tossed her a letter:

"It's rather sly in you, Miss Lonely, to carry on a correspondence and none of your neighbors be any the wiser of it."

"A letter for me?" cried Miss Lonely, turning it over and over and almost fearing to open it, waited until the visitor was well out of sight, then, drawing her chair near the window, broke the seal with trembling fingers.

The paper was rough and the writing and spelling poor, but to the longing heart of Miss Lonely never did letter carry a sweeter message.

"Respected Miss," it read.

"I feel it my duty to write and tell you the blessed tiding your flowers and verse brought to me, which you left at the camp. I was sick for weeks, and them words kept ringing in my ears, leaving me no peace day or night. When I got able I went home to the city where I came from, and I kept my resolution to do better. The sickness has gone to my lungs, and the doctor says I never will get over it, so before I die I want to tell you what your verse done for me.

"Yours respectfully,

"JEM WATSON."

With the last words Miss Lonely dropped the letter and fell on her knees. Could it be possible that while she was bemoaning her hard fate, the Lord was answering her prayers?

"Forgive me, Lord!" she cried, "and let me win more souls for Thee."

Miss Lonely rose from her knees a changed woman, with renewed courage, with hope for the future, even Cyrus within her possibility, with God's help, for had she not won a star?

LOUISE THRUSH BROOKS.

YUM-YUM, A PUG.

CHAPTER I.

FOR a pug Yum-Yum was perfect, and let me tell you it takes a great many special beauties to give you a pug which in any way approaches perfection.

First, your true pug must be of a certain color, a warm fawn-color; it must have a proper width of chest and a bulldoggish bandiness about the legs; it must have a dark streak from the top of its head, along its back toward the tail; it must have a double twist to that same tail and three rolls of fat or loose skin set like a collar about its throat; it must have a square mouth, an ink-black—no, no, a soot-black—mask (that is, face), adorned with an infinitesimal nose, a pair of large and lustrous goggle eyes, and five moles. I believe, too, that there is something very important about the shape and coloring of its toes—but I really don't know much about pugs, and this list of perfections is only what I have been able to gather from various friends who do understand the subject.

So let me get on with my story, and say at once that Yum-Yum possessed all these perfections. She may have had others, for she was without doubt a great beauty of her kind, and she certainly was blessed with an admirable temper, an angelic temper, mild as new milk and as patient as Job.

And Yum-Yum belonged to a little lady called Nannie Mackenzie.

The Mackenzies, I must tell you, were not rich people, or in any way persons of importance—they had no relations, and

apparently belonged to no particular family; but they were very nice people and very good people, and lived in one of a row of large houses on the Surrey side of the river Thames, at that part which is called Putney.

Mr. Mackenzie was something in the city, and had not, apparently, hit upon a good thing, for there was not much money to spare in the house at Putney. I rather fancy that he was managing clerk to a tea warehouse, but am not sure upon that point.

Mrs. Mackenzie had been a governess, but of course she had not started life as a teacher of small children; no, she had come into the world in an upper-room of a pretty country vicarage where the olive branches grew like stone-crop, and most visitors were in the habit of reminding the vicar of certain lines in the hundred and twenty-seventh Psalm. In course of time this particular olive-plant, like her sisters, picked up a smattering of certain branches of knowledge, and armed thus, went out into the wide world to make her own way. Her knowledge was not extensive: it comprised a fluent power of speaking her mother-tongue with a pleasant tone and correct accent, but without any very well-grounded idea of why and wherefore it was so. She also knew a little French of doubtful quality, and a little less German that was distinctly off-color. She could copy a drawing in a woodenly accurate kind of way, with stodgy skies made chiefly of Chinese white, and exceedingly woolly trees largely

helped out with the same useful composition. At that time there was no sham about Nora Browne's pretensions to art—there they were, good, bad, or indifferent, and you might take them for what they were worth, which was not much. But it was not until she had been Mrs. Mackenzie for some years that she took to "doing" the picture-galleries armed with catalogue and pencil, and talked learnedly about *chiaroscuro*, about distance and atmosphere, about this school and that, this method or the other treatment. There were frequenters of the art-galleries of London, to whom Mrs. Mackenzie, *née* Nora Browne, was a delightful study; but then, on the other hand, there was a much larger number of persons than these whom she impressed deeply, and who even went so far as to speak of her with bated breath as "a power" on the press, while, as, a matter of fact, Mrs. Mackenzie's little paragraphs were very innocent and not very remunerative, and generally won for the more or less weakly society papers in which they appeared a reputation for employing an art-critic who knew a good deal more about the frames than about the pictures within them.

However, all this is a little by the way. I really only give these details of Mrs. Mackenzie's doings to show that the family was, by virtue of their mother being a dabbler in journalism, in touch with the set which I saw the other day elegantly described as "Upper Bohemia."

Now in the circles of "Upper Bohemia" nobody is anybody unless they can do something. Unless they can paint pictures or umbrella vases and milking-stools, unless they can sing attractively, or play some instrument beyond the ordinary average of skill, unless they can write novels or make paragraphs for the newspapers, unless they can act or give conjuring entertainments, or unless they can compose pretty little songs with a distinct motif, or pieces for the piano which no-

body can make head or tail of. It is very funny that there should be so wide a difference necessary between the composition of music for the voice and music for the piano. For the first there must be a little something to catch the ear, a little swing in the refrain, a something to make the head wag to and fro; the words may be ever so silly, if they are only bordering on the pathetic, and if the catch in the refrain is taking enough, the rest of the song may be as silly as the words, and still it will be a success. But with a piece it is different. For that the air must be resolutely turned inside out as it were, and apparently, if the composer chances to light on one or two pretty bits, he goes back again and touches them up so as to make them match all the rest. It seems odd, this, but the world does not stop to listen, but talks its hardest, and as at the end it says "How lovely!" I suppose it is all right.

But all these people stand in the very middle of "Upper Bohemia," and, as a pebble dropped into the water makes circles and ever-widening circles on the smooth surface, so do the circles which constitute "Upper Bohemia" widen and widen, until eventually they merge into the world beyond. There are the amateurs and the reciters, and the artists who put "decorative" in front of the word which denotes their calling, and then put a hyphen between the two! And there are the thought-readers, and the palmists, and the people who have invented a new religion! All these are in the ever-widening circles of "Upper Bohemia." And outside these, again, come the fashionable lady-dressmakers and the art-milliners, the trained nurses and the professors of cooking. After these you may go on, almost *ad libitum*, until the circle melts into professional life on the one hand and fashionable life on the other.

You have perhaps been wondering, my gentle reader, what all this can possibly have to do with the pug, Yum-Yum, that

belonged to a little girl named Nannie Mackenzie. Well, it really has something to do with it, as I will show you. First, because it tells you that this was the set of people to whom the Mackenzies belonged and took a pride in belonging. It is true that they had a stronger claim to belong to a city set, but, you see, Mrs. Mackenzie had been brought up in the bosom of the Church, and thought more of the refined society in "Upper Bohemia" than she did of all the money-bags to be found east of Temple Bar! In this I think she was right; in modern London it does not do for the lion to lie down with the lamb, or for earthenware pipkins to try sailing down the stream with the iron pots. In "Upper Bohemia," owing to the haziness of her right of entry, Mrs. Mackenzie was quite an important person: in the city, owing to various circumstances—shortness of money, most of all—Mrs. Mackenzie was nowhere.

Mrs. Mackenzie had only three children, two girls and a boy, Rosalind, Wilfrid, and Nannie.

At this time, Nannie was only ten years old, a sweet, engaging child with frank blue eyes and her mother's pretty trick of manner, a child who was never so happy as when she had a smart sash on with a clean white frock in readiness for any form of party that had happened to come in her way.

Wilf was different. He was a grave, quiet boy of thirteen, already working for a scholarship at St. Paul's School, and meaning to be a great man some day, and meanwhile spending all his spare hours collecting insects and gathering specimens of fern leaves together.

Above Wilf was Rosalind, and Rosalind was sixteen, a tall, willowy slip of a girl, with a pair of fine eyes and a passion for art. I do not mean a passion for making the woodenly accurate drawings with stodgy clouds and woolly trees which had satisfied her mother's soul and made her so eminently competent to criticize the work

of other folk—no, not that, but a real passion for real art.

Now, the two Mackenzie girls had a governess for several years, a mildly amiable young lady of about the same class and possessed of about the same amount of knowledge as Mrs. Mackenzie herself. She, too, made wooden drawings with stodgy clouds and woolly trees, and she painted flowers—such flowers as made Rosalind's artistic soul rise within her and loathe Miss Temple and all her works, nay, sometimes loathe even those good qualities which were her chief charm.

Rosalind wanted to go further a-field in the art world than either her mother's paragraphs or Miss Temple's copies; she wanted to join some well-known art-class, and giving up everything else go in for real, hard, grinding work.

But it could not be done, for, as I have said, money was not plentiful in the house at Putney, and there was always the boy to be thought of, and also there was Nannie's education to finish. To let Rosalind join an expensive art-class would mean being without Miss Temple, and Mrs. Mackenzie felt that to do that would be to put a great wrong upon little Nannie, for which she would justly be able to reproach her all her life long.

"It would not do, my dear," she said to Rosalind, when her elder daughter was one day holding forth on the glories which might one day be hers if only she could get her foot upon this, the lowest rung of the ladder by which she would fain climb to fame and fortune; "and really, I don't see the sense or reason of your being so anxious to follow art as a profession. I am sure you paint very well. That little sketch of wild roses you did last week was exquisite; indeed I showed it to Miss du Merique when I was looking over her new art-studio in Bond Street. She said it would be charming painted on a thrush's-egg ground for a milking-stool, or a tall table, or used for a whole suite of bedroom or boudoir furniture, or any deli-

cately tinted, enameled furniture. I'm sure, my dear, you might make quite an income—”

“Did Miss du Merique *offer* to do one—to let me do any work of that kind for her?” Rosalind broke in, impatiently.

“No, she did not,” Mrs. Mackenzie admitted; “but—”

“But, depend upon it, she is at work on the idea long before this,” cried Rosalind—she knew Miss du Merique, and had but small faith in any income from that quarter, several of her most cherished designs having *suggested* ideas to that gifted lady.

“If I only had twenty pounds, twenty pounds,” Rosalind went on, “it would give me such a help, such a lift. I should learn so much if I could spend twenty pounds; and it's such a little, only the price of the dress Mrs. Arlington had on the other day, and she said it was so cheap—‘Just a cheap little gown, my dear, to wear in the morning.’ Oh! if only I had the price of that gown!”

“Rosalind, my dear,” cried Mrs. Mackenzie, “don't say that—it sounds so like envy, and envy is a hateful quality.”

“Yes, I know it is, but I do want twenty pounds so badly,” answered Rosalind, in a hopeless tone.

Mrs. Mackenzie began to sob weakly. “If I could give it to you, Rosalind, you know I would,” she wailed, “but I haven't got it. I work and work and work, and strain every nerve to give you the advantages, ay, and more than the advantages that I had when I was your age. But I can't give you what I haven't got—it's unreasonable to ask it or to expect it.”

“I didn't either ask or expect it,” said Rosalind, but she said it under her breath, and felt that, after all, her mother was right—she could not give what she had not got.

It was hard on them both—on the girl, that she could not have, on the mother that she could not give! Rosalind from

this time forth kept silence about her art, because she knew that it was useless to hope for the impossible—kept silence, that is, from all but one person. And yet she could not keep her thoughts from flying ever and again to the art-classes and the twenty pounds which would do so much for her. So, up in the room at the top of the house, where she dabbled among her scanty paints and sketched out pictures in any colors that she happened to have, and even went so far in the way of economy as to utilize the leavings of her mother's decorative paints—hedge-sparrow's-egg-blue, Arabian-brown, eau-de-Nil, Gobelin, and others equally unsuitable for her purpose—Rosalind Mackenzie dreamed dreams and saw visions—visions of a great day when she would have paints in profusion and art-teaching galore. There was not the smallest prospect of her dreams and visions coming true, any more than without teaching and without paints there was of her daubs growing into pictures and finding places on the line at the Academy and the Grosvenor. It is always so with youth. It hopes and hopes against hope, and when hope is dead there is no longer any youth; it is dead, too.

CHAPTER II.

BUT there was one person to whom Rosalind Mackenzie poured out all that was in her mind, that was her ten-year-old sister, Nannie. In Nannie she found a ready and a sympathetic listener; moreover, in Nannie's mind there was no doubt, no hesitation in believing that if Rosalind only had that twenty pounds there would be nothing to keep her back, nothing to prevent her sailing on right ahead into the roseate realms of fame and glory! If only she had that twenty pounds!

Now Nannie undoubtedly had a very gay and jovial disposition. She was always ready for fun and excitement, and had no tendency or any desire to carve out a line for herself, as her brother and sister had

both had before they had reached her age. Yet she had what was better in many people's eyes, a very tender heart and a very affectionate nature; and her tender heart was wrung and wrung again at the thought of her sister's unsatisfied longings, and the great future that was being blighted, all for the want of twenty pounds.

Yet what could a little girl of ten years old do toward getting such a sum as that together? Just nothing! Why, if the sum was shillings instead of pounds, she would still find it utterly beyond her power and out of her grasp! She thought and she thought, but thinking did not help matters! She lay awake at night puzzling her little brain, but that did no good, and Nannie's face grew a good deal paler, and set her mother wondering if the house was unhealthy, or thinking perhaps that the air from the river was damp and injurious.

It was about this time that Yum-Yum, the pug which had been given to Nannie by one of her mother's friends, two years before, suddenly became the person of the most importance in the household at Putney; for behold, one fine morning, when Nannie came down to breakfast, Yum-Yum presented her with three babies, three dear, wee pugs, which sent Nannie into ecstasies, and made her forget, for a few days, all about Rosalind's unsatisfied longings, and her craving after higher things than at present were attainable to her.

"You think they're real beauties, don't you, father?" said Nannie, anxiously.

"Yes, they are great beauties," said Mr. Mackenzie, holding one little snub-nosed pup up and examining it closely.

"And what should you think that they are worth, father?" Nannie asked.

"Worth? Oh! that would depend a good deal on how they turn out. Their pedigree is a very fair one; and at the end of six weeks or two months they might be worth three or four guineas apiece—more, for that matter."

Nannie fairly gasped, and she clutched hold of her father's arm. "Oh! daddy dear," she exclaimed, "do you really, really think I might be able to get *anything* like that for them?"

"Oh! yes, I think so," he answered, smiling at her earnestness. "But, Nannie, why do you want this money so much? Have you set your mind on a watch and chain?"

"Oh! no, dear daddy," she answered eagerly, "it's not for myself at all; it's poor Rosalind I'm thinking of"—and forthwith she poured out into her father's surprised but sympathetic ear all the story of Rosalind's artistic longings, her craving for better art-lessons, for all the good things that may be had for the sum of twenty pounds.

Long before the story came to an end Mr. Mackenzie had drawn his little daughter very closely to him, and I fancy he was thinking, when she came to the end of it, more of the goodness of his Nannie's heart than of the greatness of Rosalind's future.

"My Nannie," he said, tenderly, "my generous, kind-hearted little woman! Rosalind ought to love you dearly for—"

"Rosalind does love me dearly, daddy," Nannie explained; "only she can't help wanting to be a painter—it's in her, you know, and it's choking her. And Rosalind doesn't know a word about it. She wouldn't want me to sell Yummy's pups for her. Only you know, daddy, we can't keep three dogs besides Yummy; and we may just as well sell them as give them away, and then Rosalind would be able to have *some* of the lessons that she wants so badly."

Mr. Mackenzie smiled at Nannie's voluble information. "Well, well, you shall sell the pups and make Rosalind happy," he said; then, after a moment, added, "You know, Nannie, that I am not rich; in fact, I am very poor, but I will make the sum up to ten pounds, and Rosalind can go on thus far, at all events."

Well, a few weeks passed over, and the secret was rigidly kept between Mr. Mackenzie and Nannie. More than once Mrs. Mackenzie grumbled at the expense and the trouble Yummy's three babies were in the kitchen, and one afternoon when she came in from town she said: "O Nannie! Lady Gray would like to have one of Yummy's puppies. I told her I thought you would let her have first choice."

"Then her ladyship must pay five guineas for it, my dear," said Mr. Mackenzie, promptly. "Nannie and I are going to sell the puppies this time."

Mrs. Mackenzie rather lifted her eyebrows. "Oh! if that is so," she said, "of course Lady Gray must stand on one side. But what are you going to do with the money, Nannie? Buy yourself a watch?"

"No, mother, but—" and Nannie looked anxiously at her father, who quickly came to the rescue, and evaded the question—which at that moment was an awkward one, for Rosalind was present.

It is possible that Mr. Mackenzie gave his wife just a hint of what was afoot, for she asked no more questions about the puppies, and made no further complaints of the extra food and milk which Yummy required at this time.

And in due course, after a good deal of correspondence through the columns of the *Queen* and the *Exchange*, one by one the three little pugs went away from the house at Putney to homes of their own, and Nannie in return became the proud possessor of no fewer than eight golden sovereigns.

To these Mr. Mackenzie added the two which he had promised to make up the sum of ten pounds, and then Nannie had the supreme joy of going to Rosalind—who was hard at work in her studio painting a sunset in tints so startling that her artist soul was sick within her—and flinging her offering in a shower into her lap.

"Why, what is this, Nannie?" Rosalind cried, half frightened.

"It's your lessons, Rosie," Nannie cried, "or at least as much of them as you can get for ten pounds; and I'm so glad, dear, dear Rosie, to be able to help you, you don't know," and happy Nannie flung her arms round her sister, almost crying for joy.

"But where did you get it?—oh! the pugs! I forgot them," Rosalind cried. "Oh! but Nannie, my dear, darling, unselfish sister, I can't take your money in this way—"

"You must," Nannie answered, promptly.

"But your watch—you've longed so for a watch, you know," said the elder girl.

"Well, I have, but I can long a bit more," returned Nannie, philosophically. "I shall like it all the better when I do get it."

"I can't take it, darling," Rosalind urged.

"Oh! yes, you can if you try," continued Nannie. "And as for my watch, why, when you are a great swell painter you can buy me one—a real beauty—and I shall like it *ever* so much better than any other one in all the world."

Rosalind clasped Nannie close to her heart. "My Nannie! my Nannie!" she cried, "I shall never be as brave and helpful as you are. While I have been grumbling and growling and railing at fate, you have been putting your shoulder to the wheel, and—Oh! Nannie, Nannie, it is good of you! It is good! I shall never forget it. The first penny I earn, dear, shall be yours, and I will never forget what my dear little sister has done for me, never—never as long as I live."

A few days after this Rosalind was hard at work in the studio of the artist for whose teaching she had longed so many weary months. And how she did work!

"I have one pupil who works," her master got into the habit of saying. "Some

of you have a natural gift; you have a correct eye, and you have a firm touch. Every one of you might make progress if you tried. But there is only one of you all who works—that is Miss Mackenzie."

But all too soon Rosalind's ten pounds melted away until they had all gone. And as there was no more where they had come from, Rosalind's lessons must also come to an end!

"O mother! can't you do *anything* to help Rosie?" Nannie cried, in piteously beseeching accents the night before Rosalind was to go to the studio for the last time.

"Nannie," answered Mrs. Mackenzie, reproachfully, "don't you think I would if I could?"

"Daddy, can you do nothing?" Nannie implored.

"My little one, I am so poor just now," he answered.

So poor Nannie went to bed in bitter disappointment for her sister's trial. She felt that it was very, very hard upon Rosalind, who had worked almost day and night that she might profit by every moment of the time she was at the studio. Yes, it was very, very hard.

However, Rosalind was brave, and put a good face upon the matter. "Don't worry about it, my Nannie," she said just before she got into bed. "After all, I've learnt a great deal while I have been able to go to Mr. Raymond, and perhaps after a time daddy may be able to help me to go again, and I may do some work that will sell, and then I shall be able to go again. So don't worry yourself, my darling, for you can't help me this time. You see Yummy hasn't got any more pups to sell."

But Nannie had got an idea, and all through the hours of that long night it stayed with her with the pertinacity of a nightmare. Still, whatever it was, she did not say a word about it to Rosalind, and when Rosalind looked round for her when

she was ready to start for the studio in the morning, she was nowhere to be seen.

"Where is Nannie?" she asked.

"Oh! she's out in the garden," Mrs. Mackenzie answered.

"Well, I haven't time to go down, but don't let her worry about me, will you, mother?" said Rosalind, anxiously.

"No, no; I will look after her," Mrs. Mackenzie answered, vaguely.

So Rosalind went off fairly satisfied. "I have come for my last lesson, Mr. Raymond," she said, with rather an uncertain smile, as she bade the master good morning.

"Oh! well, well, we must have a talk about that," he answered, good-naturedly.

Rosalind shook her head a little sadly, and took her place without delay—to her every moment was precious.

But, though this was her last lesson, she was not destined to do much work that day, for as soon as she opened her little paint-box, which she had taken home the previous day that she might do some work in the early morning, she saw lying on the top of the paints a little note addressed in Nannie's round, child's hand to "Rosalind."

The next moment master and pupils were alike startled by the sight of Rosalind Mackenzie, with her face hidden in her hands, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"My dear child," cried the master, running to her side, "how now! What is the matter? Pray tell me, my dear, tell me."

Then little by little Rosalind sobbed out the whole story—how she had longed and pined for these lessons, how her little sister Nannie had sacrificed herself to help her, and then at last she put into the master's hand the little note which she had brought from home in the paint-box.

"Darling Rosalind," the master read aloud, "I thought of a way to help you last night, but I did not tell you about it

because I knew you would stop it. You know that Mrs. Clarke, who bought Yummy's little son, said she would give ten guineas for her any day, so I'm going to get father to take her there this afternoon, and you shall have the money. I don't think I shall mind parting with her much. Nannie."

Mr. Raymond took off his glasses and wiped them. "Upon my word," he muttered, in an uncertain voice, "upon my word!"

"The darling!" cried one pupil.

"Is she fond of the dog?" asked another.

"Fond of her!" Rosalind echoed. "Why, Yummy is the very idol of her heart. She has had her from a puppy; it would break the child's heart to part with her. Why, I would die," she said, passionately, "before I would let her do it. I would go out as a charwoman and scrub floors for my living all the days of my life rather than do such a mean thing. Mr. Raymond," she went on, "I must go back at once, or I may be too late. I must lose my lesson—I can't help that. But I must go back—for look at the poor little letter, all tears and—" and there Rosalind broke down into tears and sobs again, but all the same she gathered her brushes together and began to pack up all her belongings.

The master stood for a moment in deep thought, but as Rosalind put her hat on and resolutely dried her eyes, he spoke to the others who were standing around.

"I should very much like to see this out," he said, "and if you will set me free this morning, I will give you each an extra lesson to make up for the interrupted one to-day. What do you say?"

"Yes, yes!" they all cried.

So the old painter and Rosalind went back to the house at Putney together, and at the door Rosalind put an eager question to the maid who opened it for them.

"My mother?" she asked.

"Mrs. Mackenzie is dressing to go out, Miss Rosalind," the maid answered.

"And Miss Nannie?"

"I believe Miss Nannie is in the garden," was the reply.

So Rosalind led the master out into the garden, where they soon espied Nannie curled up in a big chair with Yummy in her arms. She did not notice their approach, indeed she was almost asleep, worn out by the violence of her grief at the coming parting with Yummy, and was lying with her eyes closed, her cheek resting against the dog's satin-smooth head.

Rosalind flung herself down upon her knees before the chair and took child and dog into her arms.

"My own precious little sister, my unselfish darling," she cried; "as if I would let you part with the dear doggy for my sake! I couldn't, Nannie, my dear, I couldn't—I couldn't part with Yummy myself. But I shall never forget it, Nannie—my dear, unselfish Nannie."

Nannie looked past her sister toward the tall old painter standing behind her. "Your lessons," she faltered, with quivering lips.

"My little heroine," said the old painter, tenderly, "your sister is my favorite among all my pupils. I would rather," he went on, laying his hand on Rosalind's shoulder, "I would rather teach one real worker such as she is for love, than fifty of the usual kind who come to me. She is just the real worker one might expect with such a sister."

"You will go on teaching Rosalind," Nannie cried in a bewildered way, "for nothing?"

"I will gladly," the master answered, "and in return you shall come one day and bring the pug and let me paint a picture of you both." And then the old man went away, leaving the sisters in the fullness of their joy together.

For him this had been somewhat of a

new experience, a pleasant one. They were young and he was old, but he went back to his pictures with a heart fresh and young as it had not been for years, asking of himself a question out of the pages of a favorite poet,—“Shall I thank God for

the green summer, and the mild air, and the flowers and the stars, and all that makes the world so beautiful, and not for the good and beautiful beings I have known in it?”

JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

A HOIDEN.

A VISIT to Uncle Irving's was *the* event in my year. At home I saw no one, unless a farmer who came on business stayed to dinner, or a rheumatic old woman, who had, or pretended to have, faith in Lydie's liniment, lingered in the kitchen over a bowl of soup—a pot of which I insisted should always be heating for the benefit of chance visitors. Tea would have been more popular, but I object to its gossipy flavor, whilst a bowl of soup is to both sexes a panacea to cold and hunger.

Further than this I never interfered with Lydie's housekeeping, since, from long habit, she understood my father's taste much better than I did.

At Uncle Irving's there were no women about, only old Prue—a loving short for Prudence—the queen of housekeepers, who not only kept us comfortable and in order, but also in style, even to a bowl of flowers on the table—a decoration Lydie never would have been reconciled to, since roses could not be eaten, and the falling leaves made “a mess.”

Besides Uncle Irving and Prue, there was my special chum, Cousin Harry, the one person who considered it his duty to lecture me and keep me in some sort of order. Luckily for me, I am not easily cowed, so Harry had the full benefit (for

what it was worth) of my confidence, though it did not always redound to my dignity.

I was properly considered a hoiden, though in a measure excused, since I was motherless, and my surroundings peculiar. So peculiar, that the spinsters and widows in our parish were not only willing, but anxious, to sacrifice themselves personally on my behalf, and for the comfort of the rector. But my father had no more thought of a second marriage than of the feasibility of jumping to the moon. His young wife had never died in the sense most widowers look upon death—freedom to make fools of themselves. To him, it was as if she had only gone away for a time—a short time, he hoped. I never doubted his faithfulness to my mother's memory, but it took a couple of years to put Lydie at her ease, and to end her teasing me with the desire of a step-mother.

The upshot was, at seventeen I was a sad hoiden, with no one to call me to account but Cousin Harry, my senior by five years. If at home I learned nothing useful, I also learned nothing evil. My life was a dead calm with only one disturbing element, a tiff with our next neighbor over a right of way through some fields, that involved repairing a certain

foot-bridge across a trench. The bridge consisted of three planks, and the right of way cut off a quarter of a mile, which was something to weary working-men. One of the glebe fields was included in the question, but had always been grudgingly given up. But at last the matter had become a personal one, entered into languidly by my father since it had nothing to do with the Antipodes, and hotly by me, for no better reason, perhaps, than because it was none of my business, for I am nothing if not a partisan.

—
The day after my arrival at Uncle Irving's, Harry put me through my annual catechism of short-comings. We had the whole hay-field to ourselves, a late-blooming apple-tree to shade us; Harry, prone on his back, a soft felt hat well drawn over his ears to preclude earwigs, and a cigar to add to his great contentment. Everything seemed so propitious I began boldly, in haste to be over with a part of it, at least.

The bridge, and a fresh altercation upon who should mend it, the rector or the Colonel, was the chief matter for consideration. Harry knew it perfectly, having, when in petticoats, frequently fished from either side for minnows, with indifferent success. Our childish sports fix themselves readily in our memory, and Harry had no difficulty in recalling the three planks of the bridge, nor in believing my statement that the middle one was decidedly weak.

"So a little exercise, and with the help of Dick Solomon, the rest was easily accomplished," I went on to explain.

"Do you mean to say you performed gymnastics to the extent of breaking the plank?"

"Something of the kind. I wish, under the circumstances, it had been a more graceful occupation; jumping up and down on an unsound plank is a little awkward, and Dick's agility did not improve the picture, I fear."

Harry seemed slow in taking in the

position, but he must at last, for he said, leisurely knocking off the ashes from his cigar, "Something must be done, Madge, to civilize you. For the credit of the family you can't be permitted to join a circus."

"I know it," I answered, dejectedly. "With father a clergyman it is not the thing."

"Certainly it would not be the thing. You must not disgrace him, you know."

"I don't see why it should," I answered, testily. "The life is so free and out-of-doors; it would suit me admirably, and Kitty would like it every so much."

"It is very refining and elevating, no doubt," Harry admitted.

"Hang refinement!" I said, unadvisedly.

"Caught in your own trap, my dear. You are on the highway to vulgarity, which is worse than murder. Certainly you must be looked after. I can't see where Uncle Clare's wits are."

"Deep down in the last excavation in Egypt, Harry; if you love me, do not disturb him. Papa knows of my existence, though except old Solomon's shoe bills, my expenses are next to nothing, but boots will tell on me."

"But, Madge, don't you think you ought to be of some use? You might look after the housekeeping, you know."

"And make Lydie my enemy for life. Besides, when a man does not know the difference between an egg and a toadstool, why broil out one's brains over a fire? He has done all these long years with Lydie, and neither would be pleased with my interference."

"Your case needs thought. Perhaps a boarding-school—"

"Nonsense!" I interrupted. "Boarding-school for your grandmother! You forget that I am seventeen. If you say the word again, I will sneak off with the first circus that comes, and take Kitty with me."

Harry was so long silent after this

threat that I exclaimed: "I think it very rude in you to keep me so long oscillating on a decayed board."

"I admit the position is somewhat ungraceful. You broke the plank?"

"Something more than the plank."

"Not the Colonel's neck?"

"He is too wary for such an accident. If you will puff your cigar to windward and not in my face, I may be more entertaining, for I have had a real adventure."

"Peg away," he said, inelegantly, but moving lazily, so as to relieve me of the objectionable smoke.

"Is that meant for a pun?"

"Only a reminder to be quick."

"If you are in such haste I had better wait, possibly to my next visit," I remarked, coolly.

"Go on, Madge, with your adventure. Your good temper is your best point; do nothing to mar it."

I was too anxious to disburden myself to carry out my threat, so continued:

"We broke the plank in the middle, and so artistically it was not easy to detect it. Besides, it was at the witching hour the poets call 'the gloaming,' the most uncomfortable one in the twenty-four. Now, would you not prefer to be perfectly happy or perfectly miserable rather than between the two? For that is my idea of twilight."

"At this rate you will prose on forever. I begin to think your story a base fabrication."

"I wish it were," I said, plaintively. "But to be brief—finding the plank in the desired position for the Colonel's matutinal walk, I stood still to regain my breath. But only for a moment, for I saw a man approaching—a man with a gun over his shoulder. He was whistling, but broke out into a song that sounded grandly; none of your 'Sally in the Alley,' but an opera air. Now, our neighbours carry guns, but they don't sing opera airs—a fact that dawned upon me in time

to seize Dick, and to withdraw into the elder thicket, drawing my skirts—"

"Never mind the drapery," interrupted Harry.

"He came on boldly enough, and so quickly I hoped he would cross without accident. Hoped against hope, though, for the next moment there was a small crash, followed by a groan, and supplemented by an oath."

"The poor chap went through?" Harry was growing interested.

"Went through with more vim than I expected, having the Colonel's slow, military step in mind. I built on one wet foot as the consequence, and, instead, one would think there were at least a dozen wounded men on the bridge. I was horribly frightened, and pushing Dick—who was doubled up into a knot with suppressed laughter—out of the way, I came out of my covert, forgetting what impression I might make.

"Are you hurt?" I asked.

"Hurt? I should think so. Ruined for life comes nearer the mark."

"Not quite that bad," I said, hopefully.

"That is for the doctor to say. As long as the Colonel insists upon this bridge, he ought to see that it is kept in order."

"Finding me irresponsive, he added: 'Are you strong?'

"Tolerably so."

"Girls of your class usually are. You will have to let me lean on you. This confounded bridge has broken my ankle."

"I went to his help willingly enough, but I soon found out his idea of the strength of girls of 'my class.' But I made no complaint, taking it all as the punishment for my ill-intentions to the old Colonel. I suppose he at last began to think my strength was not unlimited, or perhaps he saw me untie the kerchief at my throat, and found that I needed breath."

"What is the heaviest weight you ever heard of a woman carrying?" he asked, supposing, I fancy, that I took a personal interest in the matter.

"The heaviest weight I think ever on

record, was when those silly creatures undertook to carry their husbands out of—I forget where; for then they had not only so much *avoirdupois*, but also a secret to weigh them down.'

"I spoke pertly, and at once saw my mistake, or rather felt it, for he not only halted, but tried to get a glimpse of my face; but I was too quick for him.

"Did you get many birds?" I asked, dropping into the country drawl. 'There's a sight of them over by the dyke.'

"But they say the rector's daughter is sharper than a policeman.'

"That's not much to her credit. If I couldn't do better than—" and then I broke down in utter confusion. I felt as if I were being choked, and again put up my hand to undo my neckerchief, forgetting I had done so before, and finding, to my dismay, that it was gone. I am so sorry, Harry, for you gave it to me, and it was such a pretty red, the only pretty thing I owned."

"Don't lose the thread of your story. Go on, Madge, and I'll give you a half-dozen silk handkerchiefs."

"But there is very little more to tell. With Dick's help I got him safely to old Solomon's house, and sent to the Colonel's for a carriage. I barely managed to run home across the fields before Lydie locked the house door, which she will do at eight o'clock no matter who is out. I did not care to make a row, and perhaps have papa question me. She was grumpy as it was, and I had to find what supper I could in the pantry. But I made her rub my shoulder with her liniment, for it ached abominably."

"But what of the stranger's broken ankle?" asked Harry, his sympathy being for the man.

"I don't know anything more of him," I said, a little nettled, "for the next day brought Uncle Irving's letter, and it was as much as both Lydie and I combined, could do to get my large wardrobe ready for the start. I did intend to go to

old Solomon's to order a pair of boots to be ready when I go home, and he might have told me how the gentleman went to the Colonel's, but I thought better of it, and didn't go."

"Well, I must say for cool heartlessness, you, Madge Clare, take the rag from the bush."

And with this vulgar remark, Harry rose and strolled toward the stables.

I was glad he took the loss of the handkerchief so good-naturedly, for it was unpardonably careless in me; red silk neckerchiefs and gifts were not everyday affairs with me.

Next morning at breakfast, Uncle Irving handed me a letter he had just finished reading, remarking as he did so, that I had better consult Prue about it. It was a civil, but extremely stiff little note, signed by one, who called himself Uncle Irving's old friend and classmate, and the purport was, that his youngest son had met with an accident, having sprained his ankle. Did you ever notice that no matter what untoward thing happens to you, that at once fifty just such events transpire? In my limited experience I had never met with a sprained ankle before, and now it seemed probable that I would, in the course of a week, find any number of such casualties.

But Uncle Irving's young man was more troublesome than my lame prince, inasmuch as he desired to find in his helplessness a quiet, healthy place, near a good library, where he could go on with his studies. I fancy the young man's father had heard of Uncle Irving's fine library, and Uncle Irving—well he swallowed the bait as greedily as any gudgeon. It would be so much better for Harry to have a fresh, young mind pursuing the same studies, etc. And so he wrote, opening his house, his library, his heart—to this unhappy young man—a bit of Christian kindness and courtesy one could not help admiring.

Of course, he had forgotten all about

me, or I would have been ordered to pack up my belongings and go home until a more convenient season. And you may be sure I took care not to remind him of my presence, though I did all I could to help old Prue, who quite lost her head at the thought of a guest, not only helpless, but hopeless, for an unlimited time.

So, at last, *the* day arrived, and, dressed in my best (which was only a fresh white gown), I hastened to the drawing-room, not to be late for dinner, punctuality being the only virtue Uncle Irving insisted upon. Having lost my pretty silk handkerchief, the only article of bright coloring I owned, I had to resort to a bunch of red roses for ornament, and, as I had gathered them after I was dressed, I went to the mirror in the drawing-room to pin them on to my dress.

Whilst in the act, I heard the tap of a crutch approaching over the uncarpeted hall. I had never thought of a crutch, and so was taken by surprise, and then I saw coming toward me—slowly enough, owing to his mode of locomotion—a young man, evidently as astonished at seeing me as I was at the sight of him.

Most gladly would I have made my escape, but there was no help for me, and so I stood, looking, no doubt, as silly as I felt, but what I said for greeting I never could recall, and Roger was too good-natured ever to repeat it.

What impressed me at the moment was, alas! so strong a young fellow on crutches! And I came forward with officious zeal, offering to take them from him.

But he put me aside good-humoredly, holding the crutches high over his head.

"Let us make a bargain. You are to give me no help unless I ask for it, and I will take all your unnecessary pity with good-humor."

My face must have shown my compassion, for he added, quickly: "This will never do. I shall have to ask you to wear a veil, if you do not keep pity out of your eyes. The doctors and I are not

sure that I will ever give my crutches away for a thank-offering. But that is a secret, as yet. I am sure I can trust you."

I had to turn away my face to hide my tears, and I was glad enough when Uncle Irving came. He made no mention of the crutches, but talked of books and future studies. Then Harry came, late as usual, and one would have thought his guest equal to climbing Mount Washington, from what he said.

After the first few days our guest fell a good deal to my care. Harry was off on long tramps, and Uncle Irving could not break through his solitary habits. So my strong arm, and glib, saucy tongue were used to amuse the young man. I was much more gentle with him than was my wont, the more so because of the injury I had done to another, of whom Roger always reminded me, though for no other reason than that they were both lamed by an accident, a thought that always made me blush. That there was any other likeness I could not say, for I had no idea how my victim looked, whether light or dark, handsome or ugly. I could only vouch to his being tall, and impatient of pain. Roger was tall, but a lamb for patience.

So the summer passed quickly, and I was happy in the new sensation of being necessary to some one, for both comfort and perhaps happiness; my only drawback was from qualms of conscience when I thought of the poor fellow I had left with old Solomon.

"Pleasures are like poppies spread," and mine were as evanescent. Roger had thrown aside one of his crutches, and now he had gone to town with Uncle Irving and Harry, to hear from the surgeon whether the other one should follow it, and Prue and I were left hoping and fearing.

I suppose in every life there is one day that we always recall as the longest. To me the one really the shortest in the calendar seemed unending.

I teased myself conjecturing whether I was to hear the big doctor's verdict in a

cessual way, as any friend might, or would Roger himself tell me?

It was strange that during our summer's intimacy Roger had never told me how he met with his accident. He might have sprained his ankle by a fall from the moon, for aught I knew to the contrary.

—
I was worn out with restlessness and a long fast, for I had eaten nothing at our early breakfast, and I had kept out-of-doors all day. Dear old Prue had begged me to eat a mouthful, but I felt that even a glass of milk would choke me. And still there was a whole hour to wait before the train was due, and Harry and Uncle Irving could arrive. An hour of misery, which would creep on and on by slow seconds.

I was coming over the hay-field—the same field in which I had made the damaging confession of the broken plank to Harry. How everything had changed since then, and I with everything else. Well, I suppose one must not expect to have green grass, fair days, and high spirits all one's life. Certainly I had arrived at a stubble-field, chilly winds, and utter depression of spirits. The broken plank, and Kitty and I joining a circus, seemed such dreary jokes, both of which I could laugh at, but not mirthfully; yet I did laugh, and stumbled awkwardly enough over a clod—stumbled, and put out both hands in a wild effort to catch at something—and was saved from falling by a crutch stretched out to me.

"Did you hurt yourself?" Roger asked, sharply, as if frightened. "Do you think I can afford to have you a cripple for life? Dear Madge, will you always go through life so recklessly?"

"Why not, if I always find a friend in my extremity?" I asked.

But there was a falter in my voice, for I saw at once that he still carried his crutch; indeed, had it not saved me from a fall?

"I shall, always, dear," he said,

gently, seeing my wistful look. "Don't regard my support with such an unfriendly look. I confess to a liking for the bit of wood. It doesn't take two sound legs to make a man, since his heart counts as part of him. Now, I firmly believe, if I had come here without a crutch, you would never have looked at me. But, since I am always to be lame—"

"Always lame!" I cried, "and you so young and so strong! Oh! how will you bear it?"

"Badly enough, unless you help me as you have done all the summer. If I can count upon your help, your strong, young arm, I don't think I mind being a cripple very much. You know we always, in this world of barter, have to pay something."

But I was not heeding his good-natured words.

"I would gladly help you to the utmost of my strength and ability," I said, "but I have done, I fear, a great wrong to another, one I would never have thought of if it had not been for you. I am not very good, but oh! I hope I am just, I hope I am just."

"Dear Madge," he said, soothingly, "you are so tender-hearted, you would not hurt a fly."

"But I may have ruined a man for life."

"You would not injure me, Madge?"

"You know I would not."

"And the man you accuse yourself of injuring you would help to the best of your ability. Honestly, Madge?"

"Honestly," I repeated, though not without a shiver.

"And if I find him, and also find he needs your care?"

"I will give it to the best of my ability," I said, as firmly as I could.

"And your love, Madge? He may be proud, and so not willing to take merely your services as a sort of alms."

"One can only give what one has," I said, shortly. "My services are my own, and I will give them to pay my debts—"

"And your love?"

"I have none to barter."

"Then my bargain is a failure. I was to pay you this—"

And he threw a silk handkerchief over my shoulder—Harry's neckerchief that I had lost that memorable night.

"How did you get it?" I asked, bewildered.

"You dropped it and Dick picked it up. A surreptitious quarter did the rest, Madge, are you sorry that I bought it?"

"And my love with it?"

"I hope I have already captured that. Because a man falls in love with a roguish hoiden, it is not necessary for him to be blind as well as a cripple."

EMILY READ.

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

I BURIED the old year sighing,
I laid it away with tears,
With the pitiful faded blossoms
Of the unforgotten years :
And I turned to my lonely fireside,
For I thought what the New would be,
With only the ghosts of gladness
To walk through the world with me.

I woke when the bells were ringing,
Brightly the morning smiled,
And there! in the sunny doorway
There stood a gold-haired child.
And she sang, as afar she pointed,
And her eyes to heaven were cast,
"Be ever the roads so weary,
They lead to peace at last!"

FREDERIC E. WEATHERBY.

WHERE ARE THE TICKETS?

“WILL,” said my wife one evening, as I sat smoking by the fire after supper, “do you know there is to be a sale at Mr. Gould’s on the twenty-fifth? I should like to go, though of course we can’t buy anything.”

“I am afraid not,” I replied, gloomily enough, thinking of certain pictures and engravings, fine speculative purchases if only they escaped the attention of dealers. At this time I was always puzzling my brains for a chance of making a little odd money, and with good cause. It is a bad case to be in, full of opportunities for proving one’s self a fool or developing into a knave—results that need not happen when daily bread comes regularly, without scheming.

It is bad also to lose faith in one’s self, as I was beginning to do. My father, who was half a Frenchman, used to say “*Que je n’avais pas de chance;*” and perhaps he was right, after all. But how was it? Surely I was neither stupid nor lazy; the severest criticism I could apply did not convince me of inferiority to my successful friends. Had I not far surpassed all my schoolfellows—those especially whom I sometimes met in town, stock-brokers, lawyers, merchants, who put on flesh, wore ponderous gold watches with elaborate chains, and from the height of their bland prosperity smilingly asked “how I was getting on?” What an odious question that is to one who stands or slips at the lower end of the incline, having attained nothing but an age at which failure and poverty are disgraceful!

“I cannot help thinking,” continued my wife, “that it was very strange he did not leave you anything, if only a few hundred pounds. It would have been a great thing for us, and would have made so little difference to other people.”

“There have been stranger things than that,” I said, and went on smoking in silence; for it was not well to encourage thoughts of this kind. And yet it seemed impossible to repress them now they were well roused. Every day and everywhere I saw what Solomon also had seen under the sun. Ay; “but time and chance happeneth to all!” Were mine yet to come, or had they been filched from me long ago with the best intentions? How different my life would have been if this very Mr. Gould, lately deceased, had prevailed on my parents to part with me! Having failed, so far, in one profession, I imagined, of course, that I should have succeeded in any other; and, as I gazed into the fire, there passed before me ambitious visions of increasing splendor—ranging from having handles on all our jugs to one before my own name.

The fact is, I was getting deadly tired of the struggle, and was possessed with strange longings to live delicately for a time, before the sense of enjoyment should lose keenness. Few men appeared to me more enviable than Clive, who, on returning from India, gave orders for the purchase of two hundred shirts, “the best and finest that could be had for money.” Base, material considerations, no doubt! But there comes a period in life when

the want of those luxuries that represent a man's value in the world is almost as bad as the want of food and raiment. To a very young, single man, art may suffice in itself; but the husband and father must needs think by day and dream at night of getting and saving, steady returns and a settled future. Perhaps I had no real faculty, only artistic taste; or else the faculty had not developed for lack of early training.

At this point I felt a hand on my shoulder; such a beautiful hand it was! I was never tired of holding and playing with it; smooth and soft, cool and firm, it seemed to me the very type of refined strength, bodily and mental, of the true womanly without effeminacy.

"Come, dear, the fire is nearly out, and you are half asleep; let us go up." On the way we looked in as usual at those three little golden heads on one long pillow, placed lengthwise instead of across the bed; and I was fain to admit that, considering all things, I was not without compensation.

"Do you think, Will, that you would have let one of them go?" she said.

"I can't say; it would depend. And then there are only three."

The sale at Westfield was held on a day when I had no drawing-lessons to give; so we were able to go. The house and gardens presented the dismal aspect usual on such occasions, intensified by the havoc that was being wrought all around. The lake had disappeared, filled up with rubbish; lawns and shrubberies and the beautiful wilderness were trampled and wrecked. But there was the cedar under which my father and I sat one hot Sunday afternoon, waiting to be summoned for dessert. And when we came from the glare into the cool, shady room, how sumptuous it all looked—the long, dark, shining table covered with plate and glass, the rich pastry, the splendid fruits, the beautifully dressed ladies! What a rich odor filled the air; all manner of delicious

and delicate perfumes from peach and pine-apple, laces and frills, mingled with the faint scents of polished wood and tiger-skin rugs that pervaded the whole house! How soft the voices appeared, how refined the intonations, as of people that have plenty of time to choose their words and speak nicely. Mr. Gould's voice, especially, gave me the notion of great wealth. Lazarus, I thought, would not have had a voice like that; and when I heard the parable of Dives in church that scene always came before me; I smelt the rich odors and heard the golden tones.

This Mr. Gould was an old friend and steadfast patron of my father, the head of a large and prosperous banking concern, in which he had made a fortune. Even at that time he seemed an old man, with ruddy complexion and white hair, quite erect, but rather stiff and slow in his movements. Being very fond of children, as the childless often are, he would occasionally send a roomy carriage for us, treat us with cakes and fruits, and let us roam and play about the grounds. But I was his favorite; and so, in accordance with his wish, my father sometimes took me to Westfield with him on Sundays after dinner, arriving about the time of dessert. The place was then quite country, though barely three miles from where we lived in the north part of Hampstead. At the time of the sale, however, the Briareus of brick and mortar had stretched a long arm toward it, grasping the ninety acres of land, which were sold for building at an average of half a thousand an acre.

And all this would have been mine, with ever so much more besides, if their childless owner had been suffered to carry me off with him one fine day when the yellow chariot drove up to our door.

It was not until twenty years later that I learnt the motive of this visit, and perhaps it would have been best if my mother had never told me. After many hints and vague half-jocular proposals, Mr. Gould

had actually come prepared to take me away with him there and then, for good and all, and make me his heir.

"And we should never have met," my wife suggested, when I first told her the story. This was not easy to answer; for I was now like one who, stumbling on beneath a crushing burden, takes no delight in the flowers by the wayside, nor heeds the song of birds and the glimpses of cheerful sunlight. I forget what I said; but it provoked a retort from her lips, though not in words, and she sat for a long time afterward with one arm round my neck, while I fondled the other hand, as my habit was.

Perhaps it would also have been better if I had never told the story to her. But it slipped out one evening after I had accidentally met the old gentleman, very old now, whom I had not seen since my childhood. Finding that I lived at Hampstead, not far from the home of those days, he had invited me into his carriage and taken me to the house. It was like a dream to see the pictures on the walls and the skeleton clock with its solemn tick, and the tiger-skin rugs, just as they all were twenty-five years before. And it was like stepping back a generation or two to hear him say Toosday, consoom, nevvy, and so forth, survivals that are now extinct altogether. Formerly it had seemed to us quite natural, and even dignified in him.

It soon appeared that he remembered the family rather than the individual, referring to an old uncle, and even my father, as "your brother George," and "your brother Frank." But my wife's hopes were encouraged by his occasional hospitality and friendliness; it would all come back to him by and by. I pooh-poohed to no purpose; and one evening, when I had dined with him and he had suddenly recollected how my father used to bring me to Westfield on Sunday afternoons, I could see that she was greatly excited by this remarkable event. Much good came of it! A week later he was

dead—my kind old friend that would be—and his wealth had gone to the "nevvisies," as he called them. Their idea was to realize all they could, and so it came to pass that I was whelmed, a mere insignificant stranger and unit in the crowd that flocked to the sale.

We had a good look at the yellow chariot in the coach-house, and saw in a corner of the yard the old sun-dial, all in fragments, that used to stand, with its motto, "*Nulla vestigia retrorsum*," on the lawn sloping down from the back of the house to the lake. Then we went round to the front entrance and mingled in the motley throng that was wandering up and down, in and out, through the open doorways, peering, poking, and pushing everywhere and finally concentrating in the dining-hall, where the auctioneer's hammer was already heard. To me, whose childish fancy had here taken its first and most abiding impression of beauty and grandeur, it was painful to see the objects that I remembered so well and regarded with a kind of reverence hauled and banded about and disputed for by the unpleasant people that usually form the majority at sales.

Some of the best things went for very little, which made my wife quite indignant, as if they had belonged to us. But, when the most important pictures were put up, "Leader and the Swans," by Peroogyno, "The Marriage of Caner," attributed to Veneeshiaayno; a fine repleeker of Grooze's "Crooshcassy," I quickly perceived there was no chance for me. Those gentry who, without knowledge or taste, have a marvelous instinct for whatever is worth money, were keen on the first and last, while the second, undoubtedly spurious, was knocked down to an enthusiastic amateur. It seemed as if the moment I began to bid the competition became brisker, and I secured only a pair of fine old prints at a price leaving small margin for profit, if ~~any~~.

By and by "A writing-table in rosewood,

with drawers, brass handles and key-hole plates, by Sheraton, a very handsome piece," was announced. For this my wife had taken a great fancy while walking through the rooms, and I meant to get it for her, if possible. Two wretched creatures, one tallow-faced and pock-marked, the other with a frightful squint, bid against me with incisive promptness, and forced me to give much more than I had intended. From time to time during the contest I felt severe pinches on my arm, with "Will, dear, do stop; give it up; it's no use," and so on. Poor darling; she was not aware that I had surreptitiously put in my pocket the few sovereigns laid by for rent. When the table was at length knocked down to me, the two worthies who had seemed so eager to possess it concealed their disappointment remarkably well; indeed they displayed much pleasant humor, indulging in a kind of war-dance, and poking each other playfully in the ribs, with sly glances at me. "You see, sir, observed a decent, elderly broker, who had vainly proffered me his services at the commencement, "if you had given me half-a-crown, you would have saved a sovereign or two. We don't go against each other, generally."

The scolding I got for my extravagance began gravely and ended very tenderly; for the table would certainly be a great comfort and convenience to my wife, who had taken to writing short stories for magazines to help keep the pot boiling. Somehow, my pictures would not sell now. I had to depend more and more on giving lessons, and it seemed as though all my high hopes were to end, at best, in the career of a drawing-master. No doubt my work had lost freshness and character, since I had given up tramping about the country as I did when my pictures took. Now they stared at me for months together from shop windows until I was quite sick of them, and I would often make a detour to avoid the unpleasantly suggestive sight.

It was a very different world when I had first broken my chain, given up the wretched clerkship to which my father's narrow counsels had condemned me, and seriously taken to painting. Of course every one was horrified; but I cared little for that. Had I not exhibited and sold and received encouragement from those who knew? And oh! the delights of liberty! I sketched for eight hours a day on breezy down and purple heath, in the depths of the wood and on the river's bank, and lay down at night full of hope and courage and proud plans for the future. I saw colors and subjects with my closed and wearied eyes, and felt that I could paint anything.

My earliest success was "The Miller's Daughter." I had seen her first, a tall tomboy of sixteen, jumping hedges and ditches with a pole. The daring girl actually had the audacity to try the stream, and went plump into it, with a shout of laughter. I helped her out; came to talk with her father, and to be a frequent visitor at the mill. He almost cried with delight over my sketches of it, finding the chimneys and windows all right with regard to number and position, and gave me an order for a picture. In this I introduced Jo—short for Joanna; it was well hung in the exhibition to which I sent it, and made me something of a name.

After that I was an honored guest at the mill, and I soon found that Jo, though wild as a colt, had a large and beautiful nature, with no small share of taste and intellect. Not much education, after the manner of boarding-schools, but a mind full of history, poetry, and romance—all of the best. Her usual study was the branch of a tree leaning over the mill-stream, with a fishing rod lying on the bank. How proud she was of her strength! At first she would leap and run and wrestle with me; but that was soon given up. For it began to be perceived, even by herself, perhaps, that the charming hoinen had rounded and ripened into a graceful and

lovely woman. "Happy the wooing that's not long a-doing!" If I "was but a landscape painter and a village maiden she," at least our worldly insignificance left us as free to mate as the birds of heaven.

My *Wanderjahr* ended with our marriage. I could not well roam about as before, and for many reasons it was better to live in London. I began to introduce figures more and more into my landscapes, and make them the chief motive, instead of subordinate, as hitherto. Perhaps it was because my studies in this line had been insufficient, perhaps because people tired of seeing always one model, that I gradually lost the position I had gained, and found myself compelled at length to accept the appointment of drawing-master in a school kept by two old ladies who had known me as a boy. This was a dreadful fall; but what could I do, with those three little golden heads and growing bodies at home? It made me glad they were so like their mother, and I wanted them to grow up tall and strong, as she was. A wrestler against whom none may prevail has grappled her since then; and only two of the golden heads are left.

Soon after the sale, that school, our mainstay, was given up, and things went even worse with us. Jo scribbled away faster than ever when we two were alone in the evening; and, gazing at her while she sat at her writing-table with the clanking brass handles, I used to wonder how she could keep her back so straight, with all there was to bend it.

So it went on till two years after Mr. Gould's death, when one morning a letter came which gave us great joy, for it announced my appointment as curator of an art-institute and picture-gallery in Australia. For a long time our thoughts had been turned to the other side of the globe. The idea of getting clear away from old associations, not pleasing now, but painful, and starting afresh, as with a new life, on a new arena, had a strong charm for us both.

Here, assuredly, was an end to ambition; but it was something to get a decent competence and a respectable social standing in exchange. Let us be satisfied, pack up, and be off under the new stars!

So we, also, had our sale; but Jo would not part with the "rich man's table," as we called it, and she stowed away in the drawers all documents and letters that had to be preserved. Excepting a few cherished volumes, everything else had to go, in order to settle bills and pay for outfit and passage.

At length, when we fondly believed that everything conceivable was well and truly settled, it was found that a wretched butcher's bill had been overlooked. What was to be done? My first impulse of exasperation was to throw it on the fire, for all we had left would not pay it by some shillings. In any case we might send the amount from Australia. But my wife would not hear of it. "We must leave a good name behind us: poor but honest," she said, with a suspicious laugh, evidently forced. There was nothing for it but to sell the rich man's table. It was not yet packed, and she would empty the drawers while I fetched Mr. Isaacs, who had formerly bought sketches from me, and lately some of our furniture, from whom, after much haggling, I could get only four pounds for the table, which had cost me six at the sale.

Our packages were ready for the van that would convey them to the Docks, and we had before us three days of peace and quiet. A strange feeling, a kind of awe, came upon us, a strange affection or, at least, forbearance for persons and places that we had heartily disliked. All necessary farewells were said, and on the second day I strolled out with the intention of making certain pious pilgrimages. There was the National Gallery and the Museum, I might never see them again, and it would be well to refresh my knowledge of the paintings and sculptures that people over there would want to hear about.

No use to think of paying exhibitions, for it was a question of shillings with us now.

Entering the parlor on my return, I was at once taken aback by the sight of our trunks lying about open and half-emptied, while Jo was kneeling before one of them with sleeves up to the shoulder, tossing out the contents and plunging her white arms into the lowest recesses. It was disheartening to find confusion and excitement prevailing once more—a dismal return of chaos. What on earth was the matter? Why so recklessly demolish those marvels of ingenious packing when the van might arrive at any moment?

"The passage-tickets! I cannot find them," she said, flushed, panting, and almost crying. The strain of the last few days had been too great for her, and I also felt unable to bear much more of it. Controlling myself as well as might be, I asked where she had put them when I handed them to her.

"In the top left-hand drawer of the rich man's table," she replied; "I could swear to it. But I could not find them after turning out the drawers."

"You are convinced," I said, "that in the first place you put those tickets in the top left-hand drawer of the table. Now, John Anderson" (I am not ashamed of this innocent joke, for it used to please her), "you are an old and hardened offender. I am sorry to see you here again; but you will be dealt with more leniently if you faithfully answer my questions."

Whereupon the culprit, who was on my knee by this time, behaved in a very disrespectful manner.

"Come, young woman," I said, having disengaged myself, "you must not take up the time of the Court like this;" and the discordance between this form of address and the other produced a laugh such as I had not heard for years. And when I declared, in terrible magisterial tones, that if I heard that again the Court should be cleared, she called me a foolish old thing, and the sky was clear in a moment.

Ah, those times! When I look over the drawers of that writing-table, only used now for storing sacred relics, I am fain to echo the cry :

"Give me back, give me back the wild freshness
of Morning,
Her clouds and her tears are worth Evening's
best light."

Having ascertained that the envelope containing the tickets had been laid at the top of a drawer which was filled up, I surmised that they might have slipped through at the back into the hollow of the table. With this notion I flew to Isaacs' dingy but respectable shop, which was not far off. It occurred to me on the way that it might be well to dissemble; and I suggested, therefore, that a friend of mine had expressed a desire for the table, if he could have it at a price.

"What would the gentleman like to give, now?" said Mr. Isaacs; "it's a very good piece, very 'andsome, worth ten guineas of any one's money. I refused eight pound ten for it this very morning as ever shone; didn't I now, Rebecca?"

The girl stopped in her dusting, looked up with great black eyes from under a shock of wiry hair, and stared at him for a few moments. Even she was amazed.

"Didn't I now, Rebecca?" he repeated, in a wheedling tone, spreading out his hands and leering, with his head on one side like a jackdaw.

"I don't know," she replied; "wasn't it sold already?"

"Sold!" he said sharply; "who to?"

"The old gentleman—him that wanted the yellow bust. He took it away on a fly."

"Dear, dear! To think that I should have forgotten. So it was; so it was." Then he chuckled, wiped his watery eyes with a grimy silk handkerchief, and, resuming his blandest manner, assured me that otherwise he would certainly have lost over it; for he could not have refused seven pound ten from a particular friend of mine.

It is hard to be angry with your downright rogue ; he is such an amusing creature. But my patience was well-nigh exhausted. However, it was needful to keep up the semblance of good humor, for I must find out where the table had gone. Of course he did not know ; but here the girl was again helpful, having overheard the address given to the cabman. Then Mr. Isaacs proffered his services ; but, finding I was bent on going myself, he turned round at once and said that would be best.

"I don't think the gentleman's likely to part with the table," he said, "when he's only just bought it. But you'll talk him over, sir, if any one can. Ah ! you'd have done well in my line—just the right way with you, and cunnin', too."

The address given me was only about a mile off. As I knocked at the door of the house, which was detached and evidently well inhabited, I suddenly thought what an awkward business it was ; for I did not know the name. But here fortune favored me for once. While I was slowly taking out my card and thinking what excuse to make, an old gentleman came into the hall, and the servant handed the card to him ; he glanced at it, looked up and said : "Excuse me, Mr. Marley ; but have I the honor of speaking to the well-known artist?" I replied that I certainly was a water-color painter ; upon which he courteously invited me to enter, and took me into a room where several of my earlier drawings hung on the walls. He seemed quite proud and pleased, as if it was the most natural thing in the world that I should call upon him, proffered refreshments, and never thought of asking the motive of my visit. But there was no time to lose ; I looked round ; and there, sure enough, was the rich man's table in a recess. Having explained, I at once had the opportunity of examining it.

As I had expected, there was a narrow gap at the back of the drawers, through which anything flat lying at the top

might easily slip into the body of the table. But the drawers would not come out, and there was no room for inserting the hand. I was in blank despair. To have the top off seemed the only way ; but how could I propose this? To my great relief it was suggested that a cabinet-maker should be sent for ; and I insisted on going myself, to save time. It was near an hour before I returned with man and tools ; and there were the drawers all out. The artificer evidently thought it very simple not to have discovered at once that they were held in by a movable peg at the side. But there was nothing behind them.

This was a shock, for I had felt sure of finding the tickets. Dazed and confused, I mechanically took the refreshments that were now pressed upon me ; and, indeed, I wanted them by this time. The matter was too serious to admit vexation over such a small affair as the somewhat foolish figure I made ; so I briefly apologized to the old gentleman for the trouble given, promised to let him know on the next day whether the tickets were found, and hurried off.

Soon, however, I slackened my speed ; what need was there now for haste? I tried to face the situation on the worst side, and resolve definitely what to do. It was hardly possible the tickets could really be lost ; but, if they were not found in time, we were in the same plight—a very disagreeable one, to say the least. I had already been compelled to borrow money toward purchasing them ; where could I look a second time for such help? Perhaps, if I let them know at once, the owners of the steamship would be able to fill our berths and give us passage in another vessel ; but I feared the time was too short for that. In any case I should have to telegraph to Australia, and also by some means augment our funds. Look which way I would there was annoyance, humiliation, and fresh outlay. It was not encouraging at the outset of a new

career ; and, for one moment, I trust not more, I felt angry with my wife, who had brought all this upon me. But, after all, it was my own fault ; I ought to have kept the tickets myself.

In these last bewildered hours my faculties had been so completely absorbed by one object that everything else passed by, as the scenery does when one is absorbed by a book in the train. But vague recollections of things half seen out of the corner of the eye—a sheet of water, a castle, an old mill—will come back to the intent reader ; and in the same way I recalled the strange demeanor of Isaacs when I left his shop. Was it my over-excited fancy, or had the girl Rebecca hovered about the entrance and come forward as if to speak to me, while her father baulked her by stepping between, chattering after the manner of his kind, and escorting me with superfluous politeness well into the street ? But, if he had found the tickets, what could he gain by sending me on such a wild goose-chase and fool's errand ?

However, I went round by his shop, and found him standing at the entrance.

" Well, Mr. Marley," he said, in respectfully sympathetic tones, " I'm afraid you've had no luck. As I see you comin' along, I says to myself, ' Mr. Marley has had no luck,' I says."

" No, Mr. Isaacs, I have not ; and I am seriously put about." I had resolved on my course, and so continued : " The fact is that some papers were left in that table which are useless to any one but myself—our passage-tickets. They are not there now ; and I am afraid I shall have to put a detective to work."

" Dear, dear ! Why not tell me of it before ? See what comes of not bein' open and friendly. I remember now there were some old letters at the back of one of the drawers. But lor' ! we never take notice of such things. Perhaps the tickets was in one of the envelopes."

I never felt so much inclined to strike

a savage blow as at that moment. " Why had he not told me of this ? " I furiously demanded, in far more emphatic words.

" Well," said he, in a deprecating and mollifying manner, " why not ask me, now ? You spoke of buying back the table, and I didn't think of them. Tables is tables, and papers is papers. When gentlemen speaks of one thing, I wouldn't presoom to suppose they mean another."

" Never mind," I said ; " let me have at once what you found."

He began to shuffle and poke about, muttering that he was not sure where he had put them ; that he had bought the table as it stood, and supposed he had a right to what was in it ; that he was a poor man, and could not afford to despise money ; and so forth. At last he appeared to give up the search, wiped his face with the grimy silk handkerchief, and said regretfully :

" I shall get a rare scoldin' from Rebecca, I know ; she said the papers might be worth something." After a minute he went on, as if to himself : " I hope I sha'n't get into trouble over it ; but lor' ! all the detectives in the world couldn't find the papers if I can't."

It was clear the old rascal was too many for me, and that my cocks would not fight. I saw there was only one way, and suggested that I should feel bound to pay for his loss of time in hunting up the papers. He could have a sovereign for them if found to-night ; after that they would be no use to any one.

" That was more like business," he said ; but he would have to put some very important matters aside. As it was, he had missed an appointment. If the papers were worth anything, they must be worth more than one pound. If I had offered three pounds, perhaps he would not grudge the time and trouble.

Finally we agreed upon the mean sum, and Isaacs began to shuffle about again. I saw that he was getting warm, warmer, hot, burning, as the children say. Sud-

denly he stood glaring into a drawer, to which, of course, he had been working round. At that moment Rebecca came in from the street, and he turned upon her like a fury.

"Where's those papers?" he cried, in a hoarse voice.

"How should I know?" she said; "where did you put them?"

"In this drawer;" and then, recollecting himself: "I couldn't remember at first; but now I'm certain of it. They was here this mornin', and now it's empty."

"Oh!" she said, "there was a lot of rubbish in there, and I suppose I burnt it all together."

It was maddening. But here was an end of anxious doubt, at all events. That was a kind of relief, and the frustration of Isaacs' unholy greed was no small solace. Now the strain was over I could almost laugh at his preposterous rage and the grotesque efforts with which he was bound to smother it after his lies and shamming.

"Naturally," I remarked, "you did not look to see what the envelope contained, or you would have been sure to let me know at once. But, in the name of all the patriarchs, why did Miss Rebecca burn it, when she had said that the contents might be valuable?"

Here he put in, promptly: "You did say, Rebecca, that I should get a scoldin' from the gentleman, if they was lost; didn't you, now?"

The young woman glanced at her father with that hard, rather savage look I had observed before. Then she said, sharply enough: "Perhaps the gentleman might find the tickets at home, after all. It's only a guess that they were in the table. Very likely they were mislaid somewhere else, and all this fuss about nothing!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Isaacs, "I won't say but what he might. And if you don't have no luck, sir," turning to me, quite calm and bland again, "I won't say but what we might find them yet."

So long as there was the ghost of a chance of gaining two pounds without labor, he was not the man to give it up.

Wearied out and completely disgusted, I turned back to our lodgings. And whereas, when entering them cheerfully I had been suddenly confronted by trouble, it now happened that returning thither in despair I found myself literally face to face with gladness, for Jo came flying to meet me, waving a yellow envelope!

About an hour after I had left she had been surprised by the announcement that Miss Isaacs wanted to see her, and still more surprised when she received from that young woman the envelope containing the passage-tickets, with two or three old letters that had slipped through in the same way. The poor girl, though agitated, was characteristically discreet. She said they were found only that morning, just before the table was sold, and had been put by at the moment without examination. When I called, her father had smelt a rat; but he was angry at what he called my "cunnin'," thinking it highly presumptuous, no doubt, in an amateur like me to try to get the better of him, as he put it. He knew perfectly well what I was after, and had no fear that I should buy the table back; moreover, he wanted an opportunity for seeing what the papers were. Having ascertained—for the envelope was not fastened—he naturally resolved on making profit by the find. But she knew how great our distress would be, and thought of the poor lady and the dear little children she had seen with me. Might she kiss them? This request was not very kindly received by the objects of it, for Miss Rebecca was not over-clean or tidy, and those great black eyes under the frizzly mop of hair were frightening. But it could not be refused, and so Jo encouraged them by kissing Rebecca herself in the fullness of her heart, whereupon the poor girl had cried and implored the dear

lady to keep her secret. We should be off in a few days, and then it would not matter. In the meanwhile, she would have to stand out that she had burnt the envelopes with a lot of rubbish. Her father was a good man, but in anxiety to make money for his own he sometimes forgot the difficulties of other people. And so she went on her way, kissed and comforted once more. Rebecca will never forget to her dying day that catholic embrace which took in all her tawdry, unkempt frownsness.

After supper we overhauled the other discoveries. There were two letters twenty years old, records of a sad family story, very dusty and yellow, in mean-looking, old-fashioned envelopes with curved flap and embossed flower. There was also, which was more remarkable, a large modern envelope, with bulky inclosure, fastened, and addressed in a shaky hand to Mr. George Coope, of the well-known firm of solicitors, Coope & Grabham. This might be of consequence, so I resolved to deliver it myself next morning. I requested to see Mr. Coope on important business, and, being admitted, explained to him the remarkable circumstances under which the letter had come into my hands. While I was talking he opened the cover and glanced at the contents, giving me a keen look from time to time. Then he became quite cordial, asking me several questions about Mr. Gould and my acquaintance with him, until at length I told the story of the visit in the yellow chariot.

"It is to that visit, I suppose, he alludes in this letter. Mr. Marley, perhaps you had better read it yourself."

The letter was dated three days after the last occasion when I had dined with the old gentleman, and only two days before he died. It ran thus:

"DEAR MR. COOPE:—I will trouble you to substitute the will inclosed herewith for that which you hold, and it may

be as well that I should explain to you my reasons for the change.

"Many years ago I greatly desired to adopt as my heir a little boy for whom I had a strong affection, the son of a worthy friend, Mr. Marley, the engraver, but could not obtain the consent of the parents. Having lost sight of the family for a long time, I lately met my intended successor, and found, by inquiry and personal observation, that he is a clever, industrious, and highly respectable young man, though poor. It would not now be right completely to alter the disposition of my property, but I desire to give him some compensation, in accordance with the terms of the will, dated July 16th, 18—, which I now send you.

"I have the honor to remain, dear sir,

"Your obliged, obedient servant,
"RICHARD GOULD."

I flatter myself that I rose considerably in Mr. Coope's esteem by the preternatural calmness with which I inquired after the provisions of the new will. Of course he knew it was only assumed. But I was sure he honored the assumption; for he shook my hand kindly, expressed his great satisfaction that all had come right, and his perfect confidence that I should make a good use of my good fortune. I was to have one-quarter of the net proceeds from the sale of Westfield—at a moderate computation, twenty thousand pounds.

Hardly necessary to state that our bales were brought back from the Docks, whither they had been taken during my absence, and that I gave no more drawing-lessons, at least after a few months. For there was delay and some difficulty, and we had to live in the meanwhile. The chief point was to find the witnesses, Mr. Gould's butler and a private friend; this done there was little trouble, for the estate was not all sold as yet. And before Christmas I was able to realize the dream of years by walking down Regent Street

with Jo and buying whatever she fancied. Among our first purchases was a gold watch with chain of a florid pattern, which are proudly worn by Miss Isaacs to this day.

Two brown tomboys, as tall as myself nearly, keep house for me now in our cottage on the Upper Thames. We have a boat and a punt, and half the year we almost live out-of-doors, running up to town for a month or two in the winter. I do a bit of sketching when the humor is on me, but don't trouble myself much about it; and altogether life glides on even more smoothly than the stream, that stream so dear to the miller's daughter, beside which we knew five years of per-

fect happiness before she passed that other river.

I ought to mention that my pictures on the walls, all well hung, attract less attention somehow than certain yellow scraps of printed paper, ugly things enough, but quaintly framed and glazed. When I tell the inquiring that but for them I should have been in Australia, if anywhere, they are puzzled by the seeming paradox, and reason must be given. Having become very tired of repeating the tale, I set it down here once for all. Friends will kindly accept this explanation, and Australian papers, please copy.

ALEXANDER LESLEY.

THE STRANGER IN OUR GATES.

THE stranger in our gates, the words
ran o'er
Our lips through all the day,
The mystery grew upon us that we look
In such a careless way
Upon the stranger who is in our gates.
We barely recognize
Our Father's image in the soul that looks
From out the stranger's eyes.

And yet those same eyes have been wet
with tears
As clear as those we shed,
When strange and lonely, even 'mid a
crowd,
Our heart in secret bled.
The stranger in our gates is the small
child
Most likely strange to us,
Because we do not care to touch the soul
With fine chords tremulous.

His face we know and call of his sweet
lips—
But little of his heart!
These strangers, in the very "Gates" of
home
Should make our tears to start.

The stranger in our midst may wear such
rays
Bright as the aureole
Of an angel, yet we may not see
The light of that white soul.
But angels touch with tender reverence
The humblest souls that are,
And wonder we so coldly entertain
And look so unaware.

Of the pure spirit, that, to come to us,
Took on such lowly guise,
"An angel unaware," be sure, looks out
From those dim, pleading eyes!
The stranger in our gates is any one
By sorrow set apart,
Who wears that heaviest of earthly
weights,
The stranger's lonely heart.

And we are called to show real tenderness,
As if Christ filled the stead
Of that poor, weary, smitten child of His—
Aye, Christ hath *always* plead.
Through every heart that ever came to us
We touch the mystic chords,
And, lo! the quick vibrations tremble on,
And softly touch the Lord's.

ADELAIDE STOUT.

MOTHERS.

THE FAMILY WARDROBE.

MOST housekeepers like to have the family wardrobe as neat and clean as possible, and where there is a large family it is anything but an easy task.



"THE TORN FROCK."

Children's clothes, especially, need a good deal of looking after, to keep them in proper order. Where the goods used for

the garments are washable, it is not so difficult to keep them looking clean and neat, but even then, if woolens, it is not wise to wash them too often, owing to the shrinkage that is sure to take place. No matter how carefully they are washed, if they are washed often, in a short while they will surely, unless very large at first, be too small for the person for whom they were made, and unless there are smaller children to utilize them, they are placed away with the rest of the family cast-off clothing, and new garments take their places. Most children grow out of their clothing fast enough without any help from shrinkage, while others, not so fast growing, can wear them a long time, if care is given to cleaning, ere they are too small for comfort.

In looking over the clothes, when grease spots are found, take a basin of clear, cold water, and put into it a few drops of ammonia. Fifteen drops is enough for an ordinary-sized basin, but as this is hardly definite enough, use enough ammonia to make the water feel very soft, and yet not make the hands smart. With a flannel or cotton cloth wet in this water, rub the grease spot briskly until the grease has disappeared, then rinse the spot in clear water, put to dry, and iron while slightly damp. Watch the grease spots as they appear, and treat each of them the same as the above, and see how much longer the clothes will last than if washed occasionally. It will also save the strength used in washing, for very little strength is required for sponging. Ammonia should never be used full strength, but always well diluted with water. The prepared household ammonia is what is generally used for the purpose of cleansing.

To remove the shiny look from black coat-collars, elbows, seams, etc., where the nap of the cloth is not worn off entirely, ammonia water is excellent; but if the

whole coat needs a thoroughly good cleansing, use strong black coffee, to which has been added a few drops of ammonia, and sponge with a piece of black woolen cloth. With a little patience and some work, a much-soiled coat can be made to look almost as good as new. Men's light clothes, if sponged in ammonia water, instead of being washed, will look much nicer, and will be in no danger of shrinking. Some people use weak ammonia water for very delicate colors of silk, claiming that it is a great cleanser; however this may be, certain it is that the least wetting any silk may get the better for it; consequently, when a grease spot appears on silk, if it is to be removed at home, there is nothing like the old-fashioned brown-paper method. Get some common brown paper—the kind used by grocers is generally the best—and place under the spot in the silk on a board a sheet of the paper. Over the silk, directly on the spot, put several thicknesses of the paper, and with a medium-heated iron press firmly on top. Lift the iron and take out the piece of paper next the silk, slipping in a new piece; if the spot has not been drawn out at once, press down again, lift out the other piece, and so continue until the paper has absorbed all the grease. This way of removing grease spots from clothing may be applied to any unwashable material, with the exception of velvet, plush, etc., with equal success.

To make black cashmere look almost as good as new, when soiled and faded, wash first in good soapsuds, rinse in clear water, then put in water to which has been added a great deal of bluing. Have the water very blue, so much so that it will have the appearance of being black. Let the goods lie in this for some time, if very much faded let them lie over night; take from the water without ringing, and hang in a shady place to dry. Press when slightly damp. If a dress is to be treated in this way, and if there is much trimming on it, it is a better way to rip the trimmings from the dress and wash them separately, but if it is made up plain, or with only a little trimming, it can be washed without taking apart, and if pressed carefully will look as nice as though washed separately. In making a dress over, to be sure, it ought to be ripped apart, so there will be no varying in shade of the pieces when making

them up. Dark-blue cashmere can be made to look beautiful if washed and pressed in this way.

IN TIME OF NEED.

WHEN little Robbie Curtis was burned so badly with fire-crackers and came home screaming with pain, his pretty mamma did not know what to do.

"I have read of so many things for burns," she said, "but I can't think of anything now."

She ran into the nearest neighbor's. Yes, Mrs. Lasier knew just what to do. She went to a box standing on her bureau and took out an old linen handkerchief.

"I always keep them here," she explained, "instead of in the drawer, so as to have them handy. I never throw away a linen handkerchief, even though it is quite ragged. There is nothing so nice and soft to use in a case like this."

While Mrs. Lasier talked, her hands were not idle. She broke an egg, and with a knife spread the white on the linen.

Then they both went hurriedly to Mrs. Curtis's home. They found Robbie sobbing but trying bravely to keep back the tears. Mrs. Lasier bound the cloth on the injured foot, trying to soothe him as she worked.

In a few minutes he exclaimed, "Why, how cool you've made it feel."

His foot was sore a long time, the burn was a severe one. But by using the white of egg every day, it healed nicely.

If one does not happen to have eggs, vinegar is very good; but the latter simply cools the burn, it is not healing.

"I'll never forget what you have taught me to-day," said Mrs. Curtis, as her visitor rose to go. "If Robbie should ever burn himself again, I'll know just what to do. But if he should have a cut finger, I'd be as helpless as I was to-day. Robbie is always teasing for a knife," she added, "and he don't know how to use one. I expect every day to see him come in with the 'bleed,' as he calls it, streaming from his hand."

"That reminds me," said Mrs. Lasier, "of a fright I once had. My boy came home with a bad cut on his thumb. He had been threshing that day. As soon

as I saw the cut, I took some coals from the stove and sprinkled sugar on them. Then I told Fred to hold his hand over the coals for a few minutes. He did so and the smoke took the soreness out right away. He did not complain any more."

"Oh! you always know just what to do," sighed the hostess, "and you're never scared when anything happens."

Mrs. Lasier laughed. "I couldn't forget that remedy if I tried," she answered, "for my mother always started for the

sugar-bowl, if one of us had an accident of the kind I've just been telling you about. It was a standing joke among us that if we had a cut finger we were sure to get a lump of sugar. As for being frightened, I always try not to think how bad a wound looks. But when the excitement is over, and I have done all that I can to relieve the sufferer, I usually go to my room and indulge in a good cry."

GAENET.

BOYS AND GIRLS.

A DAY IN THE PANTRY.

NO, Master Sharpwits, this is *not* a misprint for "A Day in the Country!" The experience I am about to relate is having befallen one of my numerous juvenile friends is of quite a different sort from that.

Mrs. Thompson was compelled to leave home early one morning, not expecting to be back till late. Her sister had volunteered to bring her two boys to spend the day with Georgie and mind the house, for the servant had gone for a week's holiday to her parents in Lincolnshire. But she did not arrive so soon as she had promised, and Mrs. Thompson, having a business appointment with a lawyer in the city, could not stay for her.

"You see how it is, Georgie," she said to her nine-year-old son. "Mr. Webster expects me at eleven sharp, and he is a very busy man, whose time I must not waste by keeping him waiting. Aunt Emma must have lost the train she wanted to take, but she is certain to come by the next. That will be in about half an hour from now. You won't be afraid to be alone in the house till then?"

"Afraid!" cried Georgie, scornfully, as he marched across the room straight as a poker and his little snub nose in the air. "It 'ud take a lot more'n that to frighten me, I reckon."

"That's right! Well, then, good-bye.

If it is a fine afternoon and your aunt is willing, Cousin Jem may take you and Harry to the woods by tram. Here is a shilling for your three fares, and sixpence to spend when you get there. Now, be a good boy"—here Mrs. Thompson kissed him several times—"and again good-bye!"

When the front door finally slammed behind his mother and Georgie found himself for the first time in his life alone in the house, a peculiar sensation, unlike anything he had ever experienced before, began to creep down from the crown of his head to his heels, and he felt a strong disinclination to look behind him. You will no doubt think this very strange and ridiculous, for every sensible boy and girl knows that an empty house is just as safe as one filled with merry company, if it is the right place for one to be in; and that no one need mind being alone who loves to remember the constant, unseen presence of God. But Georgie did not care to think about God, and that was the reason he began to feel a wee bit afraid.

He went down into the kitchen; the cat was there, and she was better than nobody. But, singular to relate, the sight of that "harmless, necessary" puss reminded him of cream, and cream of custard, and custard of tarts, and tarts of the pantry; and the pantry door stood ajar!

Now, Mrs. Thompson had, with much

sorrow, found it necessary to forbid Georgie from ever entering this cupboard, for *he could not be trusted*. But on this particular occasion she had not only forgotten to lock up her goodies, but had left the door a few inches open.

"No harm in just *looking*," said Georgie to himself; "that isn't going in. I wonder what mother has left for dinner!"

So he opened the door a little wider, and standing on the threshold, glanced inquisitively round the shelves. There was a delicious smell as of currant and raspberry pie, but Georgie had not seen his mother buy any raspberries, and what could there be in that white basin so carefully covered with a plate? Had his mother made any blanc-mange, he wondered, "Oh!" he thought, "if only I could be sure we are going to have one of those lovely shakery-quakery, sliddery-gliddery things with pink on the top (that was how he mentally described it!), I wouldn't want anything else!"

The pangs of uncertainty became, as he gazed, so insupportable, that, fetching a chair to stand upon, he boldly entered the pantry, and climbing up, proceeded to examine the contents of that upper-shelf which had so excited his curiosity.

There was a raspberry and currant pie! with a piece cut out of it that showed the inverted cup within that had kept it from boiling over. What fun to lift the cup the least bit in the world, and see the red juice come pumping out from beneath and rise in the dish like a lake of crimson wine! Georgie couldn't resist the temptation. Oh-ooh-uff! There chanced to be a teaspoon lying handy, and—well, that luscious pool subsided again almost as quickly as it had risen.

That white basin, too! Georgie lifted the cover and peeped in. Stewed strawberries, whole, and floating like coral islands in a ruby sea, with which, for richness, the pie-juice would not even compare! And beside them a jug of thick yellow cream. Georgie was pretty well demoralized by this time, and was luxuriously treating himself to a strawberry and then a spoonful of cream, and then a taste of syrup, and another dip at the cream when—whew—bang—click! and he nearly tumbled off his chair with the shock.

The back part of the house was all open, and a sudden gust of wind blowing

through had shut the pantry-door with a slam, but that strange "click" was something new to Georgie, and chilled his blood with a horror of he scarcely knew what. It sounded so like a trap!

Just so, Georgie! You are caught as nicely as was ever a little mouse who ventured into a wire "safe" to pick at other people's cheese. You did not know that, after you had gone to bed last night, your father, moved by your mother's complaints that coming out full-handed she so often found it difficult to close the pantry-door behind her, had fitted to it a neat spring-catch that would lock of itself if just pushed to. What will you do now?

The first thing that Georgie did was to beat and kick at that door with all his might, bawling, too, at the top of his voice, though there was no one to hear. When at last he realized the utter uselessness of these efforts, he sat down upon the chair and burst into a storm of angry, frightened, powerless tears.

He cried till he was tired, and then kept still to listen. It must be nearly time for his aunt to come, and he not able to open the door to her; what *should* he do?

Sure enough, "rat-tat-a-tat-a-tat-tat!" soon after reached his straining ear from the street-door above. Again he called, and hammered, and yelled that he was in the pantry and couldn't get out. The visitors heard no sound of his agonized voice, or if they did, had no suspicion of whose it was or what it meant.

They knocked again, and again, and a fourth time, Jem himself thumping like a small battering-ram with blows that echoed through the house; then, greatly puzzled, the trio gave it up for a bad job, and went away.

Then out burst Georgie's tears again, in a flood. He raved, he stamped, he rolled about the floor and kicked, but nobody took any notice, for nobody heard.

An hour passed away; his aunt and cousins, who had been for a walk, came back, and tried for admittance once more. They knocked six times, and then Georgie was left to his solitude again. He was now too tired to cry, and by and by fell asleep.

When he awoke the kitchen clock was just striking two, and he was very hungry.



No bread, however, was there in the pantry—that was kept in a pan elsewhere. There was a pound of raw steak and some mutton, likewise uncooked; also butter, cheese, and sardines, but what were they without *bread*! Georgie had to fall back upon pie, but fond as he was of it in the usual way, it didn't seem half so good when he was obliged to eat it because there was nothing else.

Oh! that long, long afternoon! Will Georgie ever forget it?

Through the little grated window high in the wall he could see that the sky was of cloudless blue; what a day it would have been for the woods! And but for his own fault he might have spent it playing with his cousins under the beautiful green trees instead of in solitary imprisonment!

Well, at last, after what seemed to Georgie a lifetime of waiting, he heard the latch-key in the door, and knew that his father had returned from business. He therefore commenced thumping and shouting again with all his might, and in a very few minutes Mr. Thompson came down-stairs and let him out.

"Why, Georgie," he said, in astonishment, "how comes this?"

Very small and sorry and ashamed did Georgie look, as with downcast eyes he murmured, "I—I—I just peeped in, and the door went and banged itself shut."

"H'm!" said his father, "that's it, is it! Well, a lock that plays such tricks as that will have to be seen to; but if I were you, I would keep on the safe side of the door in future, Georgie!"

Soon after that, Mrs. Thompson came home, and they all had tea. Georgie's mother did not punish him any further for his naughtiness; but, although his father that very evening added a little contrivance to the spring-lock by which any one accidentally shut in the pantry can easily let themselves out, Georgie has never tested its usefulness. Even when sent there to fetch anything for his mother, he pops out again as quickly as he can. He has also conceived a wholesome dislike to disobedience, sprung-locks, and—raspberry pie.

JENNIE CHAPPELL.

HOME CIRCLE.

THE LAST VISIT.

I DID not know that my friend was just going away—away on that strange, unreturning journey. She did not know it either.

And so we sat together that summer afternoon, and talked of various little idle things—of what had been done, and of what there was to do to-morrow, and next week; but we did not speak of the inevitable journey; that seemed so far away; and yet, even then, her feet were turning into its mysterious pathway.

Ah! if I had known, how I would have told her of my love, and craved her pardon, if ever by look, or word, or deed, I had grieved her. How I would have watched her dear face to impress it on my memory, and treasured every word she said to me that day.

If I had only known, I should have bidden her God-speed on her journey, and given her loving messages for friends long since gone down that shadowy pathway. I should have looked upon her with reverence, as one so soon to stand in the presence of the King.

And what would she have said to me, I wonder, as a last message? Would she have appointed some trysting-place in the country to which she was going, and promised to watch for my coming?

I shall never know, for our eyes were holden; and so we parted with a merry good-night, and before the dawn my gentle friend had gone from her familiar place.

LILLIAN GREY.

A LITTLE LEAVEN."

LONG CREEK had a tremendous upheaval when Mrs. Clark moved into the neighborhood.

The inhabitants were amazed and indignant, for they thought so respectable a person would be out of place in their midst.

The innocent cause of all the harsh talk was a quiet and neat old lady, who had just moved into the "Creek."

She had taken a cottage dilapidated and gray with age and neglect, but carpenters' tools in skillful hands, and the painters' brush, had so changed the little house that the dwellers in Long Creek would stop and gaze with wonder, and with a sigh, walk on.

"It's many a long day since a painter's done work in this place," said Smith to Jones.

"I reckon they're sending another parson to convert the heathen of this town."

"Wonder what luck he'll have? Saim's t'others, I reckon."

"This is a barren soil for parsons."

Long Creek was a lovely spot on the banks of a beautiful river, but the inhabitants were a shiftless lot of people.

The men worked on and off at anything or nothing, drinking up most of their wages as soon as received.

The women were a lazy, gossipy set, who spent most of their time hanging round the doorsteps and quarreling.

Sin and destruction were rampant in that land.

The one well-kept, carefully decorated, brilliantly lighted, attractive spot in all that dismal town was the "Tavern."

A fact easily explained, for the men, and I shudder to say the women too, contributed their little mite to its embellishment and thrift.

Many missionaries had been sent to Long Creek, but their lives had been threatened and their labors unblessed,

and for many years now Long Creek had been entirely deserted by God's people.

What wonder, then, that the inhabitants now were amazed when they saw one of the dreary cottages putting on a clean face.

And their wonder still increased when, one spring morning, a neat little lady with one servant took possession of the cottage.

"Fine old time she'll have in this place," said Tom Sawyer.

"A *pianny!* Sure's you're born! We'll dance the Highland Fling for her, if she will play the tune."

"One of the Vanderbilts gone to seed," said Jack Hubbard.

"What business has she here, I'd like to know?"

But Mrs. Clark went quietly on her way, and even those abandoned wretches could not find it in their hearts to annoy or disturb her.

The little piece of garden in front of the house was filled with bright, pretty flowers, the sidewalk was always carefully swept by the faithful Jane.

A small patch of ground in the rear of the house was devoted to vegetables.

Early and late mistress and maid were seen, never idle and wearing faces of happiness and content,

When the flowers began to bloom, the wee little folks, attracted by the brilliant colors and unusual sight of beauty, would go and stand by the fence and peep through the railings to see the "pretties."

Watchful Jane or Mrs. Clark herself always saw the eager faces, and the little ones were asked to come in and walk about through the garden, and they were not sent home empty-handed.

Two little golden-haired girls, twins they were, about four years old, came every morning, in pleasant or cloudy weather, and standing near the fence would begin their childish chatter, which they would keep up uninterruptedly until a blind moved or the door opened, when they would scamper off.

Mrs. Clark overheard the following talk one day between the little sisters:

"Minnie, this must be Heaven! Don't you know mamma said, before she went, that 'twas a lovely place and full of flowers?"

"O May! Let's call loud, and per-

haps mamma 'll hear." And the two little darlings called loudly, "Mamma, mamma, be you in Heaven?" But their voices startled them, and they ran quickly away.

Mrs. Clark longed to speak to the little innocents. They seemed very different from the other children of Long Creek.

Day after day they came, and would skip away like frightened lambs at the slightest noise, or if any one attempted to go near them.

For some days Mrs. Clark had missed their sweet faces, but early one morning Jane heard the sobbing of a little one, and on going to the gate, she found one of the golden-haired children crying as though her heart would break.

Taking her tenderly up, she carried her into the house, where Mrs. Clark, after much coaxing, learned the child's sad story.

Her mamma and papa had died, and the two little girls lived with an uncle, who was kind to them, but the "aunt would all the time beat us and just for nothing," said the child between her sobs, "and now my Minnie has gone to Heaven, and I want to go too. Won't you tell me the way? Minnie said this looked like Heaven, she guessed, and so I came to see."

And the lonely child went off in delirium, sometimes begging to be taken to "her very own sister Minnie," and again talking as if the child were at her side.

Mrs. Clark sent Jane to the child's dreary home, and asked the uncle, who was none other than Tom Sawyer, to come to see her. She told him how they had found the child, and how very sick she was, and asked to keep her and care for her until she was well.

Now Tom—sober—was a gruff but very tender-hearted man, and he did love those little girls, and since Minnie had died, he had tried hard to keep sober. With tears in his eyes, and trembling voice, he said:

"God bless you, woman, for caring for the little 'un; 'twas care 't other one needed, but my wife's a queer 'un, and always hated their pretty faces. Keep the darling, if you will. She'd die too if I should take her home. I can only thank you, ma'am, for we're miserably poor."

So Mrs. Clark and Jane watched over the child through the most dreaded of children's diseases, scarlet fever.

After many days and weeks, the little

dull eyes began to brighten, strength came to the feeble limbs, and little May was able to sit up, and she soon grew strong and well.

And as she walked about the house and through the garden, she would sing to herself, and seem so contented and happy that Mrs. Clark could not bear the thought of sending her back to her dreary and poverty-stricken home.

And again she talked with the uncle, and asked if she might keep May, as her own child, telling Tom that when he was sober and manly he should always be welcomed to her house to visit the child, and again Tom answered :

"Keep her, keep her, kind lady. She will surely die if I take her to my home."

Then Mrs. Clark sent for a lawyer, and the papers were drawn and signed, which made little May her very own daughter.

Through all the days of May's sickness others were not forgotten.

Kind-hearted Jane went her rounds every morning, with broth for this one, or a little nosegay for that one, or a new dress for some little child, just able to sit up and be dressed.

For weeks the dread disease held full sway in Long Creek, and when it subsided, there was many a little face missing, and the mothers' hearts had been touched and softened by grief and death, and they had a thought for other things than drink and gossip.

Mrs. Clark had visited many homes during the siege, and had given help and counsel, and now she still kept up her visits, and the mothers began to feel some pride about their homes and tried to look neater, and "fix up a bit" to see the lady when she came.

And all the children talked of the sweet lady, and of Jane, whom they called the "woman with the big basket."

The fathers, too, whose children had been at death's door, felt anxious to show their gratitude to one who had been a friend to them in trouble, and they knew that care for their own homes would please her.

As the winter ended and spring came on, a second upheaval was visible in Long Creek, and this time the inhabitants worked instead of wondering and gossiping.

One morning Bill Jones, passing by Tom Sawyer's tumble-down cottage, stopped at

the unusual noise of hammering, and called out, "Hullo, Tom! What ye doin'? Building a new house?"

"No! But I'm fixin' up a little and am going to paint," said Tom.

"Good for you, old boy, I'll lend a hand, and you can help me paint my shanty tomorrow. Is it a bargain?"

"Agreed," said Tom.

And the two worked with a will.

And the inhabitants gazed with wonder and said to one another :

"Say, if drunken Tom Sawyer is going to paint his house, we can."

A third spring opens, fresh and full of its constant wonders, old, yet ever new, and again I ask you to visit Long Creek.

Hardly a vestige of its former self remains.

The barren place is now studded with pretty white cottages, each with its little flower garden and creeping vines.

The occupants are the same but changed.

Proud fathers, happy mothers, contented children, and healthy babies dwell in these little cottages.

Mrs. Clark, her faithful servant Jane, and her constant companion, little May, still live in their lovely home, and go about in their own quiet way, a blessing and comfort to all.

RUTH BEECHER.

COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE.

FOUR years since, a young girl, three days motherless, sat in the cheerless "livin'" room in the cottage home which sheltered 'Bijah Bowen and four children, the eldest of whom was "Hepsy," a sallow, pinched-featured girl of fifteen, and three brothers, seventeen, twelve, and ten years old.

'Twas the day after the funeral, when the patient, tender mother, who had, all her married life, borne with the weaknesses of 'Bijah Bowen, which were indolence, a strong aversion to honest toil, and a liking for the warm corner in the village store, where he sat and smoked "good" tobacco, and related coarse anecdotes to an admiring group of listeners, while M'rinity "picked up" firewood, carried water, and managed to get together a supply of food, abundant in quantity but coarse in quality.

They lived scantily, even coarsely, and the mother's heart was sorely troubled for the future of the children.

"I feel I'll be took away from you soon, darter, an' you must promise me, Hepsy, ter not forsake 'em. Thar's Nelse, he's past sixteen, an' big fer his age, an' he don't keer ter mind me. He's leadin' Buddy ter like ter dreen the glasses over ter the grocery, an' keer more fer huntin' than wuk. 'Bijah's a good man, on'y he wa'n't raised ter hard wuk. His par was one of Tennessy's foremost fahmalies, but lawsy, he got broke up when yer par was a boy. Hepsy, yer will hev 'em ter larn somethin' genteel that'll make gentlemen of 'em, ef yer has a chance? promise me, darter," and in her eagerness, the poor mother reached out from the low couch a hand hot with fever, and grasped the strong, firm one of the girl's, who sat beside her, darning coarse butter-nut-dyed hose.

"I'll do my best, mar, but the boys don't keer much fer my sayin' and doin's," replied Hepsy, trying to soothe to sleep the tired sufferer who closed her eyes upon that winter's day, never to look upon the faces of those she loved in this life.

Hepsy, rejoicing that her mother slept, ignorant of its nature, hurried to prepare "supper for par and the boys," who noisily trooped in just at twilight, hungry and happy, though ragged and poorly shod.

"Mother, how are yer; gittin' stouter all the time, hain't yer?" called 'Bijah, as he washed his ruddy face in the huge gourd-basin, near the fireside, where a great fire burned, throwing lights and shadows upon the face of the sleeper.

"Mother, yer sleepin' sound. O Hepsy, Nelse, Buddy, Dode, she's dead!" he cried, then, kneeling beside the low couch, the awe-stricken children listened to the lamentations of the husband, who knew the value of his wife to be above rubies, though he was not the careful husband and father that he should have been.

Strong man as he was, the little, frail, consumptive woman was the stronghold in the Bowen household, and her going completely prostrated 'Bijah Bowen, who could only sit and listen to the tinkle, tinkle of the sleet upon the window-pane as the storm raged, whispering—

"Poor M'rinthy, she went, an' without

knowin' how much I loved her," while neighboring village-women looked after "things."

The wife and mother was laid in the old Mt. Olive Cemetery, and the day after the funeral, Hepsy sat alone, surrounded by disorder, thinking bitter thoughts, wishing that she had "never been born," feeling keenly their poverty and low standing in the social scale; in short, was ready "ter give up ter go ter nothin' with par an' the boys."

'Bijah and the boys were at the grocery, even Dode had deserted the lonely home.

"I don't keer, I'm not goin' ter try ter be anybody. God don't keer fer me, or He wouldn't have placed me in this pore little out-of-the-way Tennessy place, whar thar's no chance fer folks ter larn things. An' father's quit tryin' ter git anythin' ter eat, an' Nelse won't work," said Hepsy, her face distorted with the intense bitterness she felt in her soul toward God, the world, and all in it.

"Hepsy, open the door quick, I'm 'bout to drop my burden," called a cheery voice, that Hepsy knew belonged to no one but P'nelopy Lowe, the plain, good woman, whom everybody loved, because she was a tower of strength in time of trouble.

"I had a little spare time, an' thought I'd bring you a bakin' of dried apple-pies an' my bread. S'pose I give you a little help with your mendin'. Boys do wear out clothes fast; thars my 'Lonzo, that used ter keep me sewin' busy fer him; but now that he's a telegraph operator he makes money enough ter keep us all rale comfortable. 'Lonzo was sayin' ter me last night, that he thought Nelse would make a fust-class operator, an' he'd be glad ter larn him, if he'd wuk fer him nights until he had a place of his own. You might mention it ter Nelse, if he'd like ter commence right away. The pay is thirty dollars a month in this little Tarwater. In big places, operators gits more'n hundred dollars a month.

"You git tired of mendin', patchin', and cookin', I do, too, an' I'm a woman with a family ter look after. When I'm tired an' trembly I jest sit down an' read some of the papers 'Lonzo gits on the train—I've brought over some of 'em ter you. They're full of good things, housekeepin' hints an' fancy-work directions.

"An' I've brought over an old account-book, an' young folk's paper, that the boys like to read, thinkin' Buddy and Dode might like to make a scrap-book these long evenin's.

"Your par likes ter read loud, 'Lonzo's heerd him often, an' says he's number one, has a nice smooth voice; it might help ter keep the boys at home evenin's if you could get him to read loud some lively story. We neighbors are goin' to be more sociable this winter, an' have been thinkin' 'bout meetin' around at each other's houses once every week ter read an' sing an' talk. But the main thing that I came over for was to ask you to come over an' help me with my bakin' an' work. I find I hain't as young as I once was. I'll have to pay yer in bread an' pies an' cakes. Money is a little scant with us, but we git from the farm plenty ter eat. I'm glad you can spare the time ter help me.

"Can't yer sing for me, Hepsy, 'Go bury thy sorrow?' and for want of breath P'nelopy Lowe sat silent, while the sore-hearted Hepsy softly commenced, in a clear soprano:—

"Go bury thy sorrow,
He knoweth thy grief;
Go tell it to Jesus,
He'll send thee relief."

Fuller and softer grew the voice; the song was one that the dear mother loved, and the plain young face was almost glorified when she reached—

"Hearts growing a weary
With heavier woe,
Now droop 'mid the darkness,
Go comfort them, go.
Go bury thy sorrows,
Let others be blest,
Go, give them the sunshine,
Tell Jesus the rest."

And then peace and resignation had entered her heart, she felt strong and able to take up the work her mother had given into her hands.

Her father and brothers were out of the fold, tenderly and prayerfully they must be led into the "new life." Living meant more than eating and drinking. Hepsy had aroused to the knowledge that even the "Tarwaterites" were human beings

with hearts, souls, and she felt that God did care for the poor and oppressed, the "widow," and the "fatherless."

P'nelopy Lowe knew that she had "heartened" the "discouraged child" and left her preparing the "pone" and bacon for supper.

Sly P'nelopy knew that the proud, shy young girl needed the training which she could so well give before being able to manage the humble home of the Bowen's, and laughed to herself as she thought of "her needing help on bakin' days, and getting old."

"Nelse" took kindly to "telegrafting," making such rapid progress in his undertaking that he one day found the office at Tarwater too small for him, and found his way into one of the "big offices" in a city, where a "tellygrafter" was paid "more'n a hundred dollars every month."

"Beat his teacher all holler," was 'Bijah's proud boast, which nettled a little kind-hearted P'nelopy Lowe, who thought:

"'Bijah Bowen forgot who 'twas helped 'em out'n the ditch, when he talked so big; but Nelse was smart, an' no mistake."

'Bijah was slow in waking up, so long had he slept the sleep of slothfulness, which he would fain have shaken off, shamed by his children's newly developed energy.

But his "readin' loud" brought new ideas, and stirred up ambitions which had long lain dormant in his sluggish soul. The new departure from the old listless ways caused the "Tarwaterites" to think that—

"'Bijah Bowen was lookin' out for another wife.' If he has sought her, he has found her not, as Hepsy, a cheery-faced and voiced young woman, a notable and capable homemaker, rules 'Bijah and her brothers Buddy and Dode, who are hoping to do "just as well as Nelse."

Hepsy, for his mother's sake, smiles on 'Lonzo Lowe when he visits often "Buddy and Dode," and P'nelopy yet "comforts His people" and "heartens up" the discouraged.

ELLA GUERNSEY.

HOUSEKEEPERS.

WAYS TO DO THINGS.

THREE are ways—and ways; but the following give such satisfaction in one home, that perhaps they may in others, especially where there are young housekeepers.

Way to use odds and ends of meat:—There are always such from roasts and boiled ham, and when all the nice slices are taken off, pick the remainder free from bone and gristle, and chop fine; then mix it with mashed potatoes as for cod-fish cakes, adding a generous piece of butter, and a beaten egg, and salt and pepper to taste; pat out into cakes, sprinkle with flour, and fry brown in butter, making a very good supper dish.

An easy way to make fruit-cake:—Two eggs, a coffee-cup of granulated sugar, half-cup of butter, half-cup of very strong *made* coffee, half a nutmeg, one teaspoon each of cinnamon and clove, ground; a teaspoon heaping of baking powder, and flour to stir very stiff. Add one pound each of currants and raisins, and half-pound of citron, and bake two hours. This makes one good-sized cake, and will keep three months—if it is locked up.

An easy way to make marble-cake:—Shave two tablespoonfuls of Baker's chocolate in a bowl, and set it in the top of a tea-kettle where the steam will soon melt it. Meanwhile make a good dough as if for layer-cake, beat thoroughly, and turn part of the mixture into the bowl of chocolate, mix it through well, and put alternate layers in the baking-dish. This is a nice looking cake when cut, and for those who like chocolate flavor, one that will be often called for.

Way to make lamp-burners good as new:—Place them in a tin tomato-can

with a little pearl-soda, cover them with water and let them boil half an hour; then rub them bright with sapolio or brick.

Other ways that are good:—Put a few drops of ammonia in the dish-water, also when washing windows and lamp-chimneys, and in cleaning willow-ware.

Add a few drops of kerosene to cooked starch.

Use thick cooked starch for paste in scrap-books instead of mucilage.

Make a soup of the turkey when it is not longer presentable on the table.

Save all pieces of bread, and once a week make a dressing for the roast-meat; it can be baked in the side of the dripping-pan, or in a basin if preferred.

Make mince for pies, adding everything but raisins, and cook two hours, stirring often; it will keep for weeks in cold weather, and for months if put up like canned fruit.

LILLIAN GREY.

POTS AND PANS.

WHAT an exceedingly homely subject; so unattractive, in fact, that it is frequently ignored and consequently proves a prolific source of vexation of spirit to the housekeeper.

The pot calls the kettle black, and there is a strange and unhappy truthfulness in the accusation, as you have doubtless discovered with sadness when you have invaded your kitchen, only to find that your fingers left a streak on every pot and pan that Bridget assured you was as clean as hands could make it, for she had scoured it that very morning.

Have you ever dined at a house when each dish had an indefinable flavor o' every other dish? No matter how charm-

ing the hostess or how rich the appurtenances of the dining-room, all is obscured by the fact that the potatoes have been boiled in a sauce-pan after onions, and the steak has been broiled on the same gridiron that the salt fish occupied in the morning. All the elegance is as the fair exterior of the apple of Sodom and hides but ineffectually the want of careful supervision over the commoner details of the home life. You may be sure that these same pots and pans are at the bottom of all the trouble.

There is nothing so essential in the kitchen as perfect cleanliness, and the pots and the pans should have the first consideration.

It seems entirely unnecessary to say that all cooking utensils should be carefully cleaned after each using, but Bridget will, in nine cases out of ten, swish round a little water in a sauce-pan or frying-pan, mop it over with a wet and probably dirty dishcloth and shove it into the closet.

Small fragments stick around the edges of the lids and in the corners, and there they stay (unless discovered by the watchful eye of the mistress), protected from all encroachments in the shape of soap and water and forming the nucleus of continued deposits of like nature. It is just these minute particles that give the flavor to everything cooked in the pan.

One day a week should be devoted to this branch of housework, and will amply suffice to keep all kitchen utensils in a spotless condition. If you superintend

in person the labors of the maid, so much the better.

There are many ways of doing the same thing, but the quickest and easiest methods for producing equally good results should always be employed. In this age time is money, and labor-saving inventions are numerous and near at hand.

A tiny scrubbing brush that can be bought cheaply and a small whisk broom will be found very useful in cleaning the insides of pots.

The vigorous use of hot water and soap or occasionally soda will drive out the last vestige of dirt and grease.

When polishing new tins rub the soap on one side of the cloth, then turn over the cloth and rub with that side. This precaution prevents the gritty particles from coming in contact with the polished surface and scratching it.

For all brass kettles use vinegar and salt, but in so doing take great care to thoroughly wash the kettle after rubbing, and also be particular that there are no cuts or scratches on the hands, for the chemical compound formed from the salt, acid, and brass is a virulent poison.

There is always acid in fruits, and when cooking this forms a poisonous coating on the brass, and therefore all brass boilers should be thoroughly scoured before being used again.

Articles made of fine brass and copper may be polished by a mixture of rotten stone and sweet oil, or by silicon applied wet and allowed to dry before rubbing up with a cloth first and then a chamois skin.

NOTES FROM "HOME" HOUSEKEEPERS.

Well-tried recipes, helpful suggestions, and plain, practical "talks" on all subjects of special interest to housekeepers will be welcome for this department, which we have reason to believe most of our readers will find interesting no less than useful. Our "HOME" friends will here have opportunities of assisting each other by giving timely and helpful replies and letters, and of asking information concerning any subject they wish light upon. All communications designed for this department should be addressed to the Editor "HOME" Housekeeper, P. O. Box 913, Philadelphia, Pa.

TO DOROTHEA.

WHEN I finished reading Dorothea's pleasant "Note" in the October "HOME," it seemed to me as though I must take her by the hand and call her "friend." I think all must thank her for it, and thank our editor, too, for words of cheery, friendly counsel, and let us all strive to follow Dorothea's advice, "offering of our best to each other." Acting upon this resolution, I send to-day some suggestions which I hope may benefit others as I have many times been benefited by "HOME" suggestions, which, though simple in themselves, seemed to be designed especially for me.

First, let me tell you of a method of settling coffee when eggs are scarce. I found it in a household column, and it has been worth more than its weight in gold to me, the only objection (to some) being that you have to grind your own coffee, which I always do. Put in a dish one pound of browned coffee; break an egg (first thoroughly washing the shell), over this, shell and all, mix thoroughly, dry in a warm oven, and grind. I like a slight flavor of egg in coffee, and this plan I think excellent and a great saving.

In summer a warm-water bath makes one much cooler than one taken in cold water. The warm water opens the pores

of the skin and allows free perspiration, while the cold water has an exactly contrary effect. I know this is unseasonable, but I hope all will remember it for next summer.

Here is a cold weather hint: Wipe your windows over with a cloth dampened in alcohol, and it will prevent the accumulation of frost on the panes.

Common baking-soda is excellent for cleaning your tinware; dampen a cloth, dip in the soda, rub the tin with it, then wipe dry.

A very little vinegar added to the water in which meat is being boiled, will, if the meat is tough, render it tender, and not make the meat taste.

I fully indorse all the good words that can be said concerning vaseline. We consider it an invaluable remedy for burns, scratches, etc., etc. For heavy colds, when the lungs are stuffed, or for croup, spread it thickly on flannel and apply. A grating of nutmeg or a sprinkling of snuff adds to the good effect, but the vaseline alone serves its purpose excellently.

Another remedy: I wonder how many "HOME" mothers are aware of the virtues possessed by lard and salt, made into a paste as thick as will spread smoothly, and applied to the seat of any severe inflammation? It should be spread on any thick cloth, folded cotton or woolen fabric. For the lungs a sprinkling of mustard may be added. The salt is preservative, the lard penetrating, and both form a harmless but certainly most potent remedy for inflammation, as I have frequently proved. Last summer a dear friend was suffering from that painful and often fatal disease, inflammation of the bowels. Her physician gave her up, and other doctors had done the same, when an old English lady in the neighborhood recommended the remedy here given,

It was faithfully tried, and my friend is living to-day. I spoke of this case to an old family physician, who replied that he could not doubt the efficacy of lard and salt, used as stated. He further said that if, in that dread of mothers, scarlet fever, he were confined to one remedy, it would be lard. He had seen the lives of children saved many times, in this disease, by anointing the body thoroughly all over with it, then rolling the child in a sheet or blanket and covering warmly. It certainly cannot be harmful.

But I am making a long tarry for a stranger. May I call again, please?

MRS. H. L. CLAPP.

[Certainly you may; we shall be glad to have you do so.]

A GENEROUS PORTION.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have long had a strong desire to join the "HOME" band, but feared I could say nothing of worth or merit. Now, however, if the recipe and the few suggestions I offer can be of any help to others, I gladly contribute my portion to the "Notes." I like this recipe better than any I have ever tried for

COOKIES.—Three cups of sugar, one cup of butter, one cup of sour milk, one-half teaspoon of soda, enough flour to roll thin, bake in a quick oven. Mine bake as fast as I can cut and put them into the baking-tins. I sometimes put in an egg, but we think them really better without.

Now, for a convenient hanging-shelf: Take one of the boards used for wrapping cloth on, which you can obtain from any mercantile house; they are long and narrow. Saw in each end, say, four or five points, three or four inches deep; now fasten on a shelf a little below the middle of the board, with a three-cornered piece under it for support; all can be nailed on from the back with finish-nails. Bore a hole in the middle of the top to hang it by; you can paint or decorate it as pleases your taste.

For a slipper-pocket, paint one of these boards, tack on it two pockets made of oil-cloth, one above the other, using brass-headed tacks, put a gimlet-hole in the top to hang up by, and you will have a very useful article for your bed-room. I think it very nice to have "a place for every-

thing," and good housekeeping depends upon it.

I crochet a great deal, and every pattern given in "Notes" is soon brought to light. I sometimes think it may be wrong to devote too much of our spare time to crocheting; better be reading some pure and ennobling book. We think the "HOME" MAGAZINE is the best; the stories are so pure and elevating.

JESSIE.

[Thank you for your kindly indorsement of the Magazine, which it hopes always to deserve, as now. You will like the crocheted laces given by "Sandusky" this month. After all, variety is proverbially the spice of life, you know, and why may not crocheting be counted among the spices?]

CROCHETED EDGINGS.

BROAD LACE.—Make a chain of twenty stitches; turn. One treble, two chain, one treble in seventh chain, five chain; one treble, two chain, one treble in eleventh chain; five chain; one treble, two chain, one treble in fifteenth chain; chain five; one treble, two chain, one treble in nineteenth chain; one treble in twentieth chain; three chain; turn. One treble, two chain, one treble in two chain; * two chain, fasten in middle of five chain with one double crochet; two chain; one treble, two chain, one treble in two chain; repeat twice from *; twelve trebles in the loop formed by skipping six chain in first row, three chain; turn. One treble, one chain, between each of the twelve trebles; one treble, two chain, one treble in two chain, * five chain; one treble, two chain, one treble in two chain; repeat from * twice; one treble in three chain, chain three, turn. One treble, two chain, one treble in two chain, two chain, fasten in five chain as previously directed, two chain, one treble, two chain, one treble in two chain, repeat twice from *; one treble, two chain, between each of the trebles of scallop, chain three at the end, turn. One double in first, two chain, chain three, one double in next, repeat from * nine times; one treble, two chain, one treble in two chain, chain five; continue as in previous rows. As the body of the lace is so simple, further directions are needless. This completes one pattern. Begin second scallop at second row, turn-

ing with a chain of five at the end. Fasten the first row of scallop in first three chain of previous scallop, and the third row of scallop in second three chain.

This lace may be made wider or narrower, is very effective, and adapted to many uses.

CLOVER LEAF.—Six chain, turn. Three trebles, one chain, three trebles (shell) in fourth chain, one treble in last chain, chain three, turn. Shell in shell; chain five; fasten with double crochet in first stitch of shell in first row, turn. Twelve double crochet in five chain; shell in shell, one treble in three chain, chain three, turn. Shell in shell, chain five, fasten in between last shell and first chain of five, turn. Six doubles in first half of five chain, chain five, turn. Fasten in sixth stitch of previous twelve double, turn. Twelve doubles in five chain just made, six doubles on last half of next five chain (making twelve in each of the chains of five), shell in shell, one treble in three chain, chain three, turn; repeat from second row.

This is a simple but dainty little pattern, suitable to trim baby's clothes as well as those of children of a larger growth. I am almost afraid our good friend, the editor, will scold, but I am going to venture one more pattern, and then will stop for this time. It is one I know all will admire.

POINT LACE.—Make a chain of seventeen stitches; turn. Three trebles, one chain, three trebles (shell) in fourth stitch of chain, three chain, fasten with double in seventh chain, shell in tenth chain, three chain, fasten in thirteenth chain, shell in sixteenth chain, five chain, fasten with one double in last chain, turn. Twelve doubles in five chain, shell in shell, three chain, fasten with one double in first treble of second shell, shell in shell, three chain, fasten in first treble of third shell, turn. Shell in shell,* three chain, fasten in first treble of next shell, shell in shell, repeat once from*; five chain, fasten in space between shell and first five chain; turn. Six doubles on five chain, chain five, turn; fasten in middle of twelve doubles, turn; twelve doubles on five chain, six doubles in next,* shell in shell, fasten in first treble of next shell; repeat once from*; shell in shell, turn. *Shell in shell, three chain, fasten in first treble of next shell, repeat once; shell in shell; chain five, fasten between previous shell and five chain, turn. Six

doubles on five chain, chain five, turn; fasten in middle of twelve doubles (where five chain of last row was fastened), turn; six doubles on five chain, chain five, turn; fasten in middle of second scallop of twelve doubles, turn; twelve doubles on five chain, six doubles on next and six on next, * shell in shell, chain three, fasten, repeat at once, shell in shell, turn. *Shell in shell, chain three, fasten; repeat once, shell in shell, chain five, fasten in between shell and scallop, and continue as before. These rows are continued in this way to a depth on the edge of five chains with twelve doubles in each, which completes one point. Begin again at the first, fastening the first five chain in space between shell and last twelve doubles of previous row. The directions are rather long, but not difficult.

SANDUSKY.

[The help promised Santa Claus will be just as acceptable for the birthdays, for Easter, etc., and we shall be pleased with those directions for the "slumber robe."]

A "HANDY BOOK."

How many of our "HOME" housekeepers have one, I wonder? and how many of those who have not will thank me for telling them about mine? I bought a common "blotter," such as merchants use, for twenty-five cents, but a "dime tablet" would do quite as nicely. In this, for the past three years, I have written down suggestions which I have found to be helpful in my work, of every sort (you may be sure Mrs. L. N.'s washing recipe went in). The back part I have filled with tested cooking recipes—in fact, it is a genuine encyclopaedia of housewifely knowledge, which I would not take a great deal for. Try it, sisters.

I have just been making soft soap from a recipe in my book. Many housekeepers, I know, never use it, but I think it preferable to hard soap for many things, such as washing dishes, scouring the white top of the kitchen table, etc.; and I usually make quite a little quantity in spring and fall. In the meantime, I save my soap-grease, trying out all the rough scraps and straining the clear grease into a pail or other vessel, and adding to it as I may. When ready to make the soap, I buy the crude potash (not what is known as

concentrated lye), in the proportion of one and one-half pounds of potash to a big quart of the grease. Place the potash, say twelve pounds, in a wooden firkin or pail, pour over it sufficient boiling water to cover, stirring it thoroughly. In the morning put the solution in an iron pot and set on the fire, adding seven or eight quarts more of boiling water, and stirring until the potash is well dissolved. Have your eight quarts of grease in a tight barrel—a small pork barrel is good—turn over it the hot solution of potash, slowly, stirring all the while. Stir thoroughly before leaving it. At noon, or in three or four hours, add seven or eight quarts more of hot water, repeating this operation toward night again. Add about the same amount of hot water each day for a week, giving the soap a good stirring each time. The soap should be stirred every time you think of it, once a day at least, for a month. I do not use it until it is so old as that, for fear of its eating my hands, and if you keep it longer before use it will be all the better.

Another good way to make soap, by boiling, is to have a solution of potash or lye in a strong half-barrel or firkin; into this throw all rough scraps of grease, which will be eaten away gradually. When you come to make the soap, you will only need to boil it up, adding a little more potash, perhaps.

How many of the readers of "Notes" live in cities or large towns, where it seems necessary to shut out the gaze of curious eyes by sash curtains, or other device? To such, let me give a little hint. Instead of buying the regular fixtures, rods, etc., which are comparatively expensive, procure at the hardware store some copper wire the size of a lead pencil or a little larger, have it cut in proper lengths and straightened. Put a screw-eye in each side of the window-sash at the proper place, run your curtain on the wire and, slip the ends of the wire in the screw-eyes; these serve every purpose, especially for common windows, and cost not more than eight cents a window. For the curtains you can get the common spotted muslin and dip in strong coffee to produce the "fashionable" effect. The "fixtures" may be gilded if desired.

MARGARET H.

"HOME" RECIPES.

I have been a reader of ARTHUR'S MAGAZINE for eight years, and could hardly keep house without it. Have tried "Aunt Mollie's" recipe for bread-cake in the July number, and it is "just splendid." Here is one which I have used for fifteen years without having one failure. Once tried, I know you will be sure to try it again:

RUSKS.—Take one pint of new milk; warm and thicken with flour about as thick as pan-cake batter; add one yeast cake, dissolved in a little warm water, or one-half cup of good soft yeast, and set over night in a warm place. In the morning beat up four eggs lightly, add twelve ounces of sugar, and ten ounces of shortening (butter is best, but part good lard will answer), mix all well together, then mix with the sponge; mold, not too stiff, keep in a warm place until real light, which will be in four or five hours; cut the dough in about thirty-five pieces, which will make five rows across a large dripping-pan; use just flour enough to handle, no more; mold the pieces in long-shaped biscuit, handling lightly; let them rise again until light; then bake in a moderate oven from thirty to forty-five minutes.

MRS. ALICE GILES.

[It almost seems to us that one-half a yeast cake, or even less, would do quite as well as a whole one. Have you ever tried it so?]

GOOD COMMON DOUGHNUTS.—Beat two eggs (one will do in times of scarcity) to a froth, add one cup of sugar, one cup of sour milk, one teaspoon of soda (not scented), one teaspoon of grated nutmeg, a little salt, and just enough flour to enable you to roll and cut them out. If liked shorter, dip a spoonful of hot fat in from your frying-kettle. Always use the freshest eggs possible to get; good doughnuts are difficult to have with stale eggs; and always put all the flour in at once, as by stirring in a little at a time you get in more and the result is that the cakes will be hard and dry up quickly. This item applies to all varieties of pastry.

Will some friend kindly give a reliable rule for Spanish cream?

ELLA HATHAWAY.

PORK STEW.—Cut four or five slices, more or less according to the size of your family, of pork in small pieces; put in the bottom of your kettle; let fry a few minutes, then add a quart of boiling water, two or three onions, a carrot and parsnip, if liked, sliced up; let cook a few moments, then add your sliced potatoes. You should have just water enough to cover these. Let cook five or ten minutes, then add your dumplings, which I make just as sour-milk biscuit: one cup of sour milk, soda according to sourness, a little salt, flour to roll. Cut in pieces with a knife; place quickly on top of your stew; cover tightly, and let cook for twenty minutes. This is nice for a country meal at times when pork seems to be the only resource in meat. A good chowder may be made, too, by using salt fish, freshened, instead of fresh fish.

Would it not be a good plan for each reader of "Notes" to send in occasionally a tested recipe on a postal card? That would not seem much work, and the recipes thus collected would be of great benefit and very interesting. I enjoy trying the recipes that other "HOME" housekeepers have tried and "not found wanting."

FARMER'S WIFE.

[We cordially indorse your plan, which is a very pleasant one.]

FRUIT CAKE.—One pound of sugar, one-half pound of butter, three-fourths pound of currants, one pound of raisins, one-third pound of citron, four eggs, spice of all kinds to taste, one cup of milk, about four cups of flour (the different kinds of flour vary so in thickening properties that it is difficult to give exact quantity). Proceed to mix as for common pound cake, except that you add to the flour two and one-half teaspoons of baking powder. This recipe is not expensive, and almost the only cheap cake of the kind I know which is palatable. If wished, I will send some tested recipes in use among the best Southern housekeepers.

MRS. W.

[That our "HOME" housekeepers will be very glad of them, we have no doubt.]

REQUESTS.

Would some friend be kind enough to tell me how to make curtain bands of macramé cord or worsted? ANNA L.

WANTED.—A recipe for baker's ginger-cakes; also, can any one give a new, inexpensive, and pretty way of making a bureau scarf and other simple furnishings for a bed-room?

MADGE.



BABYLAND.

BABY'S VALENTINE.

A SAD old man with a long, long nose,
With thumbs for his fingers and
thumbs for his toes.
An old-maidish man with a bustle and
hoop,
With a very small skirt and a very large
loop,
Somebody sent to our baby.

Baby looked long and with great solemn
eyes,
Scanning each feature in dreamy sur-
prise.
The scanty-grown whiskers his wee fin-
gers trace,
"At's papa," he said, smiling up in my
face,
And papa had sent it to baby.

L. R. BAKER.

AUNT MARGARET'S VISITORS.

SELLING THE BABY.

TOM and Willie, who live five squares
away, came up this morning to tell
me about a wonderful baby that the doctor
brought to their house a week ago.

Tom is a bashful little boy, but Willie
is quite talkative, and after enlarging
upon the surprise caused by the advent
of the newcomer, he suddenly broke out:
"Tom there thought the baby was
ugly."

"I don't think so, no-ow," drawled
Tom, looking very much ashamed of him-
self.

"He asked Dr. Dunn," continued Wil-
lie, "why he took Mrs. Dunn a pretty
baby and brought mamma an ugly
one."

"I don't think so no-ow," repeated poor
little Tom.

"What made you think so at first?" I
asked.

"Cause it was red," and Tom's ten lit-
tle fingers pulled mercilessly away at the
fringe on my new table-cover; "but it's
got white no-ow," and his black eyes
looked up into my face and his bashful-
ness disappeared as if by magic. "It's
got the littlest feet I ever did see, and its
hair is just awful long and curly."

"Why, it certainly must be a fine
baby! You wouldn't sell her, now, Tom,
would you?" I asked; "you wouldn't ac-
cept, say, two dollars for Bessie?"

"Yes'm, I would."

"O Tom!" I cried, "I didn't think it
of you. I didn't imagine you'd sell your
little sister. Willie wouldn't do it, would
you, Willie?"

"If you'd give me two dollars I would."

"Aunt Margaret," said Tom, afraid lest
Willie would get ahead of him, "if you
give me one dollar and fifty cents the
baby's yours."

"But we can't buy and sell on Sunday,
Tom."

At this Tom looked very downcast.

"If you come over to our house real
early to-morrow morning you can have
her for one dollar," he whispered, but at
the door he came back. "I do hope
mamma will let me sell her to you, Aunt
Margaret," he said, anxiously.

EVENINGS WITH THE POETS.

WHILE THE NEW YEARS COME AND THE OLD YEARS GO.

WHILE the new years come and the old years go,
What words and deeds shall our records show?
What worthy aims have been nobly sought?
What works of love have our efforts wrought?
What darkened souls have we shown the light?
What wandering feet have we guided right?
What broken hearts have we bound and healed?
What sacred truths have our lives revealed?
What seeds of good have been daily cast,
To whiten the harvest fields at last?
We shall find our own, we shall reap as we sow,
While the new years come and the old years go.

ADA M. SIMPSON.

NEVER BE DISAPPOINTED.

NEVER be disappointed,
Or fret when the world goes wrong;
For a hand Divine,
Overruling thine,
Will right it again ere long.

Never expect to gather
Life's honey without a sting;
For the peevish bees
Will not always please,
And pleasure and sweetness bring.

Never be greatly ruffled,
Or ever cast down to find,
When thy faith depends
Upon worldly friends,
They are fickle, however kind.

We looked for a sunny morning,
To wake at the falling rain;
But never despair,
There's a morrow fair,
And the shadows will pass again.

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Never be disappointed,
If crossed in thy cherished will.
Is it not best
In God's will to rest,
Patient, and calm, and still?

Oh! it is useless fretting,
Making our neighbors sad.
Though, perhaps, we may
Tread a crooked way,
Contentment will make it glad.

WILLIAM LUFT.

FULFILLMENT.

WITHIN the quiet cloister of my heart
A white dove sits and mourns the live-long day,
Soft shadows, all transparent, round about her play,
And mark her out as one who sits apart.

So soft and sweet and mournful is her moan,
That all the madding crowd without the gate
Do halt, and wondering listen, marveling that fate
Should doom that fair white dove to mourn alone.

She sits and mourns all day, but at the fall of night,
There comes a sound of rushing pinions swift,
A gleam of shining white the shadows lift,
And touch the barred gate with silver light.

No sound then save the tremulous aspen tree,
As the faint night wind stirs it in its sleep,
Oh! happiness, too deep for utterance,
thou shalt keep
A bond of tender silence 'twixt the dove and thee.

H. S. ATWATER.

INTERIOR DECORATION.

THE HOMELY PARLOR.

BEFORE we begin to decorate and furnish the parlor, let us ask ourselves for what purpose the room is intended. I am almost afraid to ask this question, lest somebody, even in this day, should hint that it is a room to be kept clean, and shut up when no company is present; or, that it is a chill and stately apartment only used on high-days and holidays. This is not what the homely parlor should be, and if you so treat it, you may be sure that the room will resent its abandonment, and, in spite of the upholsterer's art, and all the money you can spend on it, the apartment will be but a barnlike place, crying out to the most casual visitor that it is a fraud, not a genuine cozy "living-room."

Every parlor should be used, carefully if you like, but still used every day. Those who have many sitting-rooms, may keep one specially set apart for state occasions, but those who have only one parlor and a dining or breakfast-room should furnish the homely reception-room in an attractive and cozy style, but not too grand to live in.

With some of us it is impossible to furnish a parlor handsomely, and subject the furniture, carpets, and decorations to the wear and tear of frequent use. If that is so, furnish the room plainly, and with inexpensive articles which can easily be replaced. I have known some prudent young married folk to wait a year or more before furnishing their parlor, because they could not afford the ponderous "suites" and heavy draperies they left in their old homes! What a mistake, when all the time, by the exercise of economy, judgment, and taste, they might have dared a departure from the old ideas of the conventional, and made themselves a

cheerful, homelike room which would be a thousand times more attractive and expressive of themselves and their tastes than anything they finally bought with all their savings.

For rich or poor, color is the best friend a woman may have in this work, and now no parlor need be colorless. Some people prefer having painted walls, while others best like papering. Suppose, then, we begin with the walls, since they are to be the background of all our future efforts. We shall have to be doubly careful in the selection of color for the walls, if some or all of our interior decoration and furniture are already provided. If, on the contrary, we can begin with the walls and carpets, and furnish afterward, there is ample scope for the exercise of care and taste. The color of the walls gives the general tone to the room, and also serves as a background for our pictures.

I will now endeavor to describe a parlor with painted walls. The advantage of paint is, that you can wash it down whenever it is soiled, and, from a health point of view, it is far preferable to paper. But some folk look upon painted walls as being cold and unfriendly, in which case they must have recourse to paper.

A very pretty effect was recently obtained with walls painted in a soft tone of salmon color. The wood-work of doors, windows, and skirtings was in that shade of salmon color which deepens into a warm gray. The moldings were silvered instead of being in conventional gold. If the silver is considered too elaborate, deeper shades of salmon-gray can be substituted for it. The floor was stained with walnut varnish. A square of carpet with a border all around was placed in the centre of the room. The colors in the carpet were dark-gray and salmon tints, and through

all went a judicious sprinkling of rich, deep, coral-red. The blending of these colors was particularly good, being neither too light nor yet too dark. Several chairs were of walnut, with rush seats. These were very light, and could be easily removed from one part of the room to another. A few chairs were low, deep-seated, and comfortably cushioned. One was covered with gray cretonne, charmingly flowered with rosy Japonica blossoms and foliage. Another was in salmon-tinted cretonne, with curious gray and neutral-tinted designs. The sofa was old-fashioned, with straight back and upright cushions. These were upholstered in soft walnut tints, relieved with the faintest shades of a pale-amber and golden-brown.

There were two sets of curtains. Those nearest the windows were of simple cream-colored spotted muslin, held back by salmon-tinted pongee-silk sashes. Those nearest the room were made of salmon-colored woolen material, with a hand-embroidered border, the design of which was successfully carried out in gray, coral, and brown, with here and there a thread of silver. Two useful-sized walnut tables were in the room with a gypsy occasional table, and a small, quaintly shaped one for papers and magazines. The mantel was of modern design, with several shelves and brackets. The other decorations consisted of pretty trifles, vases, and flower jars.

Another arrangement for a parlor, the walls of which are to be papered instead of painted, is in blue. A light, delicate blue is very lovely, and the only difficulties lie in the fact that so few carpets are in themselves good blues or are made in colors which harmonize with blue. I do not know why this is, but you will find it so when you come to look for such a carpet, and in the fact that many wall-papers which look exquisite in the shops are heavy and dull on the walls. Perhaps in this last matter it is better to choose the paper with a light-blue background and a small design in some warmer tint, or with a glimmer of gold through it; but if you are afraid to trust your experience, and cannot rely on the taste of the paper-hanger, perhaps the blue paper should be abandoned and a faint terra-cotta or yellow substituted; indeed, many people

prefer these tints as a background for the pictures and *bric-à-brac* of the day.

After the wall-paper is chosen it still remains to decide whether or not a dado is needed. I rather like dados in all rooms, since they make the ceiling seem lower, and thus add to the cozy look of the room, but, of course, if the ceiling is already *too* low, the dado must be dispensed with. But there is always this advantage in a dado, that all the wear and tear on paper generally comes below the dado line, and this part may be renewed and changed at less expense than is incurred by re-papering the whole wall.

The dado, then, being decided upon, should be of a shade nearly like the wall, but covered with a wreathing, twisted design several shades darker.

The figure in a very large, high room may be large and showy, but in a moderate room, or still more in a small room, the design should be small; but in no case are detached figures desirable, since they make the dado very spotty and striking-looking.

I know a very pretty blue parlor, and I cannot do better than describe it, since its practical success in being pretty and not expensive may be just what you are looking for. The main wall is pale, greenish-blue, with a design of delicate grasses in darker blue—the design being touched here and there with gold, as if the grasses were frosted with it. The dado is about the shade of the grasses, and where it joins the main body of the wall, the line is concealed by a very narrow strip of black and gilt. These walls are charming and the cost very moderate. The ceiling is papered a very pale blue, with sparsely scattered gold stars—but I never have admired that, as it looks heavy, and I should like to replace it by a very warm cream-color, or, perhaps, a pale, pinkish buff, either with gilt stars or a design of a deeper shade of the ground color.

The wood is tinted in lightest shades of buff and blue, and the cornice molding is buff, with a line of almost pure yellow in one of its deepest recesses.

A much richer-looking wall is made on this model, but with considerable more expense, by using a dado of gold Japanese paper. This is not difficult to find in a suitable pattern of curious hieroglyphic-

like designs on a dead-gold ground. The wall may be the same as before, and the dado a heavy design of gold on a pale-blue background—some geometrical figure with interlacing lines being best—and never make the mistake of getting for the parlor a flowered paper for body or dado. Save these decorations for the bedroom.

As for carpets, of course Persian rugs over stained floors are the very best choice one can make, and can be found in any variety to harmonize with the blue walls; but Eastern rugs cost a great deal, and not every one can afford them, in spite of the fact that they last a lifetime, and are cheap in the end. If, however, they must be given up, stain the floor a reddish or yellowish-brown, and put over it a rug as good as you can afford. Let the mat be as square as possible, if the shape of the room will at all admit a square rug. I hardly need to repeat the many advantages of using rugs rather than "all-over" carpets—chief among them being the ease with which they are turned end for end or side for side when worn spots are growing visible; then, too, a rug is carried from room to room, or from house to house, and may be used equally well anywhere, since it does not need to fit into corners and recesses.

Stained floors may seem troublesome at first, but I am sure you will never give them up willingly, if you once try them. If, however, you feel that they do add much extra work in a household where the needs are many and the hands all too few, it is only common sense to make your work as light as possible; but, even so, you can lay the rug carpet over matting even, without any design upon it. To get a good blue rug will be, I am sure, difficult, and will need time and much hunting; but, failing to get one which suits you in every particular, don't get a carpet which you only half like simply because it is blue. A pale gray with design of darker gray is found in cheaper carpets; for nowadays Brussels designs are to be found in inexpensive goods, and I, for my part, prefer

a cheap but pretty carpet to a dear and ugly one.

The draperies for a blue—or any other—parlor are so entirely dependent upon the owner's purse that no very definite suggestion can be made beyond the oft-repeated one that the pretty cretonnes and lovely "crazy cloths" do admirable work even in drawing-rooms. Where the means will admit, the richness of the curtains and draperies may rise from these humble fabrics through lace, silk, and fine wool to the royal draperies of silk plush. But, having decided on the material, let the colors in your blue parlor be somewhat as follows: White curtains—or silk ones with a blue design—against the window-pane, and over them a material in which there is much yellowish-pink or terra-cotta; sofas covered with a color in which pale-blue and white predominate may have cushions of rich, golden brown, while a wicker chair or two should have cushions of pale olive-green—the shade which harmonizes with pale-blue—and the mantel lambrequin, chair backs, lamp shades, table covers, and stray cushions must be called into service to give enough warm, bright color to keep the parlor from seeming cold. These things are all folded away in summer, and without them and with the furniture shrouded in linen, the place will look cool enough to satisfy any one.

In regard to furniture, I have only one or two hard-and-fast rules. The first is—Never buy one of those cheap suites made with elaborate but coarse and ugly wood-work, and covered with every sort of ugly material, from the abominable hair-cloth to staring red and blue plush.

A second dictum is—Avoid all those *tours de force* of the upholsterer's art known as "fancy" tables, "fancy" chairs and sofas, where expense is not spared, but taste is too often absent. It is far better to put your money into one or two good, substantial and pretty pieces of furniture, supplying the others in wicker work or in seats made of boxes covered with material, and gradually substituting for these better and more costly articles.

HOME DECORATION AND FANCY NEEDLEWORK.

NOVEL WORK BAG.

THIS bag, although it has the appearance of being round, is formed of a perfect square. It can be made

corded silk with sprays of gas-light green flowers scattered over it and lined with green to match the flowers. As I said above, it is made of a square piece which measures twenty-one inches. The same



WORK BAG.

of a large silk handkerchief. The one seen here is a very beautiful and dainty one. It is made of cream-white

amount will be required for the lining. Stitch the two together across two ends and turn it; run three rows of shirring

across the ends just turned, leaving a space of three inches on each side, and make the length of Shirring three inches and a ruffle at the top two and a half inches. Turn the edges of the outside and lining in on the sides and baste them together.

Fold the bag and overhand the sides together, and shirr them up as closely as possible; make a large bow of satin ribbon to match color of the flowers and fasten over the part just shirred, and also a piece on to hang it on the arm by.

time. The cloth is intended to lay in the centre of a dining-table, to set the fruit or flowers on. It is made of a fine, heavy piece of white linen a half-yard square.

The pattern is first stamped on, then the lines of the design are covered with a white cord, and kept in position with a button-hole stitch done in three shades of yellow wash-silk.

The veins in the leaves are done in outline stitch. After it is all embroidered, the linen is cut as close as possible to the embroidery around the edges.



FRUIT CLOTH.

FRUIT CLOTH.

THIS is copied from one of the prettiest pieces of home work that has come under my notice for some

NECKTIE CASE.

TO make a case like the one seen here, you will need a piece of chamois, measuring sixteen by sixteen

inches, a pretty shade of satin thirteen by sixteen, and one and one-half yards

Quilt the satin over a layer of scented cotton and turn the edges under, making



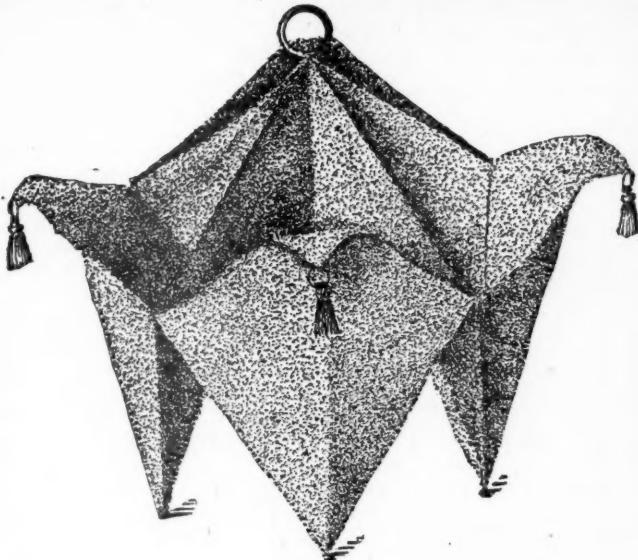
NECKTIE CASE.

of one-inch width satin ribbon to match the satin in color.

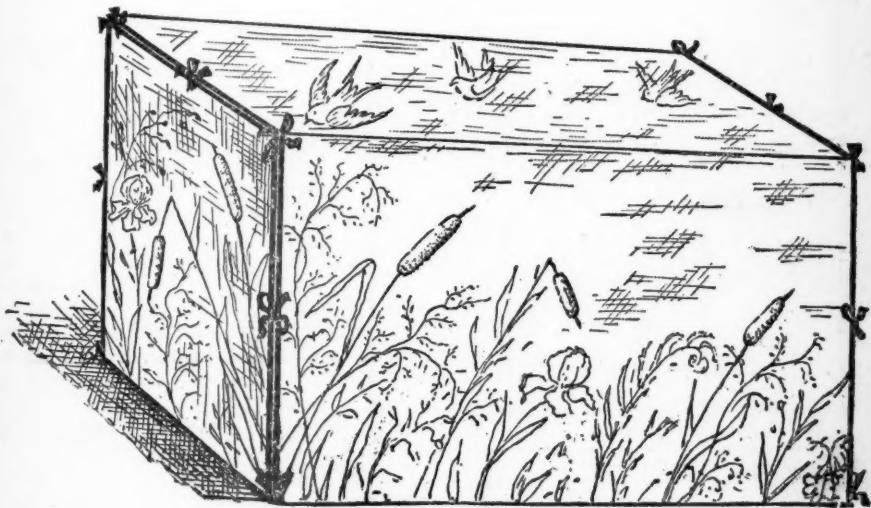
it into a pad or lining twelve and a-half by fifteen inches. Divide the ribbon into

two strips and baste it across the lining three inches from the top and bottom; attach it to the satin in three places,

wide. Paint some pretty design on the top and the name of the one it is to belong to on the bottom.



JEWEL-STAND.



TRUNK COVER.

forming four spaces to slip the neckties under. Join this and the chamois neatly together, cut the extra length of the chamois on the ends in fringe, making each strip about a quarter of an inch

JEWEL-STAND.

FOR the foundation of this pretty little affair, you will need eight pieces of paste-board, four inches square;

these are to be covered neatly on both sides with plush, using a contrasting color for the inside. It takes two pieces to form each pocket, these are overhanded together on two sides and the four pockets joined on the top. A crease is pressed in the pockets, as seen here, to make

bottom for it to rest on and a brass ring sewed on the top to lift it by.

TRUNK COVER.

THIS is especially adapted for one who is obliged to have their trunk in their room. The cover seen here is made of gray linen, bound with brown braid; strings of the same are sewed on to tie it together with.

The top and front are in one piece—the ends are cut separate—this makes it much easier to fold, and it can be used on a trunk that varies a little in size by tying the piece of braid tight or loose.

TRAVELING CASE.

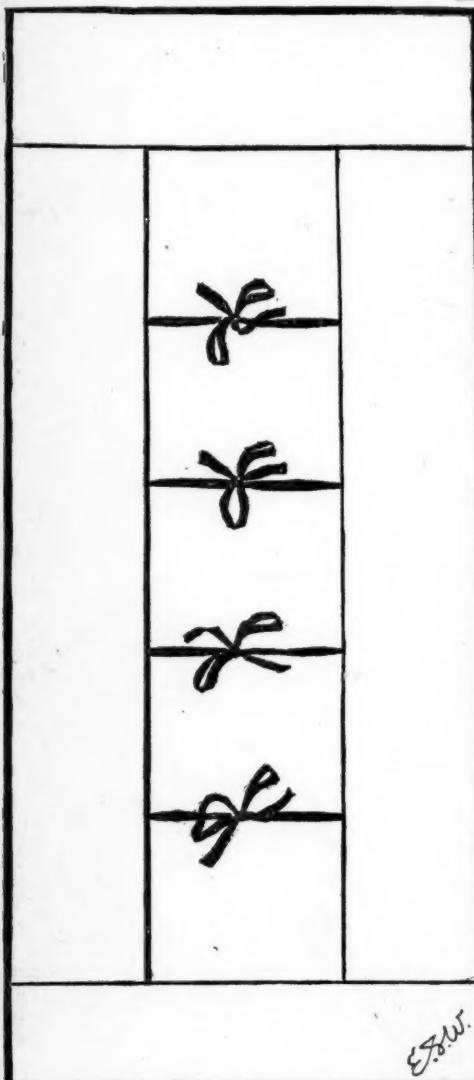
THE lady who furnished us with the pattern for this convenient case, says she prefers it to a satchel in a great many instances, especially to carry a nice dress in she thinks it is unsurpassed.

It is made of brown linen: First, take a piece a yard and a half long, and twenty inches wide, fold one end up eight inches, and the other six, and baste the side-pieces on—they should measure six inches in width and twenty-six in length—join them to the ends that have been turned up and bind the opening with the braid and sew pieces of the same on, as seen here, to tie the sides together, when it is ready to be folded. Bind it around the outer edge with the braid and stitch a row across where it will be folded to make it look more finished when ready for the strap. The initials are worked in a darker shade of brown. Fold it in three and use a large strap to carry it by.

TRIMMING: CROCHET.

them stand open, and a corner of each bent over to attach a little silk tassel to. Brass tacks are stuck in the points on the

MAKE a chain of thirteen stitches. First row.—One treble into the tenth of thirteen chain, two chain, pass over



John.

two stitches, one treble into each of two next stitches, four chain, one treble into the end stitch, turn.

Second row.—Five chain, pass over one stitch, one treble into each of eight trebles, turn.

Third row.—Three chain, one treble into each of nine stitches, turn.

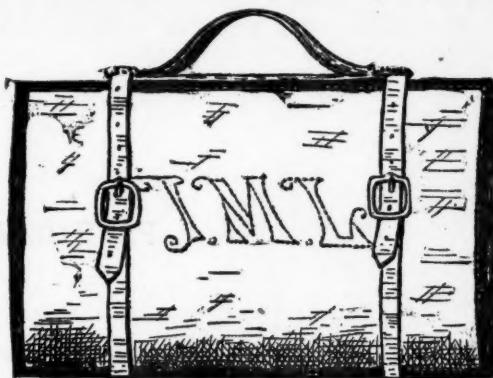
Fourth row.—Five chain, pass over one stitch, one treble into each of eight last stitches, turn.

Fifth row.—Three chain, one treble into second treble, two chain, pass over two stitches, one treble into each of two stitches, three chain, one treble into third of five chain, turn.

Sixth row.—Like second row.

Seventh row.—Three chain, one treble into each of nine stitches, five chain, one single into third of five chain at end of sixth row, six chain, turn.

Eighth row.—* Four double trebles under the loop of five chain, keep the top loop of each on the hook, and draw through all together, seven chain, one treble under loop of five chain, seven chain, repeat from * twice more, one double under five chain, five chain, pass over two trebles, one treble into each of eight stitches, turn.

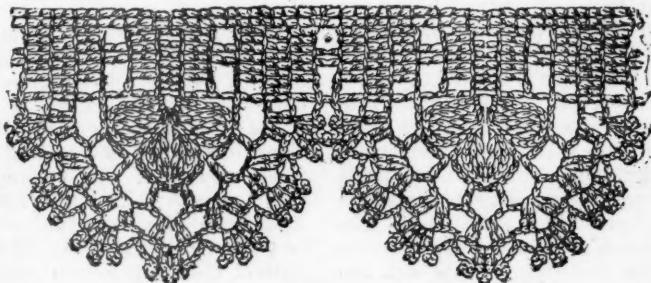


TRAVELING CASE. (NO. 2.)

Tenth row.—Six chain, one treble into next double of last row, * five chain, one treble into next double, repeat from * four times more, six chain, one treble into next treble, one chain, pass over one stitch, one treble into each of eight next stitches, turn.

Eleventh row.—Three chain, one treble into each of ten stitches, one chain, two trebles, two chain, and two trebles under next chain, repeat from * six times more, work along the top of next row of centre with three singles, turn.

Twelfth row.—Three chain, * one treble



CROCHET TRIMMING.

Ninth row.—Three chain, one treble into second treble, two chain, pass over two stitches, one treble into each of two next stitches, three chain, one treble into third of five chain, four chain, one double into top of double trebles, four chain, one double into the side of two next clusters of double trebles together (see design), repeat from * twice more, pass over two rows of centre, work along the top of next with three singles, turn.

under two chain, three chain, one double into the first, repeat from * twice more, one treble under same two chain, three chain, one double under one chain, three chain, repeat from first * six times more, two chain, one treble into first of ten trebles, one chain, pass over one stitch, one treble into each of eight trebles.

Repeat from the first row for the length required.

FASHIONS.

FASHION NOTES.

MANY of the newest woolen gowns are in most beautiful blendings of color, whether in wide stripes or large squares, the stripes being so wide that only two come in one breadth of the material, and it is not an easy task to arrange these stripes in the most becoming manner; they are generally made up with a plain material. In a gown of brown cloth and stone-colored striped silk, a length of striped silk starts from the left shoulder and is carried to the edge of the dress on the right; the silk on the bodice has the stripes running straight down and then crossing the bodice to the left of the waist; the silk is all in one piece and drapes the front of the skirt, all but the left side.

As a rule, the skirts of all costumes, indoor or out-door, are made plain but not scanty, and trimmed profusely with broidering and panels of different material; self-trimming braid or cord is, without doubt, the most serviceable. Now that so little dress-improver is worn, it requires great care to make the skirt hang quite evenly at the back; many skirts are being made with no drapery, only large plaits at the back, finished with a large sash. The number of steels that are used must depend on the material, if it is soft, two steels with a small pad, if the material is thick and heavy, one steel is sufficient.

Colored silk handkerchiefs are worn pushed into the front of the bodice of dresses instead of muslin or cambric ones.

With regard to millinery, the newest and prettiest bonnets are small, in velvet or felt, trimmed with fancy feathers and birds, and velvet flowers; cloth bonnets are also fashionable, embroidered with silk passementerie and trimmed with rib-

bon. Passementerie is also used on velvet, and the newest shapes are quite flat at the back. The embroidered cloths are in charming shades of dove-color, gray, and white, mixed with velvet of a darker shade. Black is introduced on almost all, either for the velvet ribbon trimming a felt bonnet, or the black may be introduced by two wings of birds, with a velvet brim, plaited at the top, drawn down its sides and forming short strings. A pretty bonnet of ruby velvet has a low crown and three deep plaits of velvet in front. A band of passementerie borders the crown, which is almost hidden by a large bow of black moiré ribbon, the bows pointing toward the front.

A great revolution seems to have taken place in the sleeves, for the plain coat sleeve is by no means so popular as it has been. A new idea for a tight-fitting sleeve is to have folds down the upper part, fastened on the top by an epaulette of passementerie, and ending at the elbow under a long cuff extending from the elbow to the wrist, covered with passementerie; of course, the bodice must be trimmed with folds and passementerie. Epaulettes of passementerie should only be worn by slim figures. The modified form of the leg-of-mutton sleeve is being worn a great deal, and very often sleeves are of quite a different material from the bodice. A new fashion for cloth sleeves is that they are full from the arm-hole to half-way below the elbow, where they are gathered over an inner sleeve of cloth of another color, tight-fitting, and turned back as a cuff. In some cases, the cloth is gathered at the arm-hole and a band of galloon is carried round the arm-hole and another band covers the seam which joins the full part of the deep cuff.

Fig. 1 is a charming plastron to wear over a plain bodice, or equally suitable under the open fronts of a "Directoire"

of the gown is cut low, or it forms a dressy addition to a plain high bodice or an elegant waistcoat under an open front.



FIG. 1.

bodice, and consists of velvet cut on the cross, piece lace, and lace edging. The foundation of muslin is five inches broad



FIG. 3.

The square lapels are made on stiff muslin, and the collar-band is also lined with the same.



FIG. 2.

at the top, fourteen inches long, and four inches wide at the waist.

Fig. 2 is a pretty model where the front

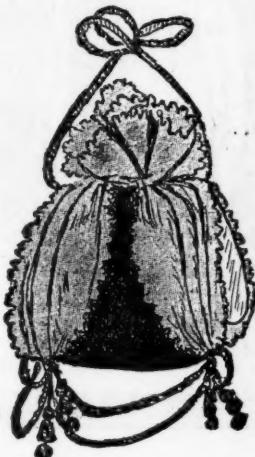


FIG. 4.

The plastron of lace is made in one length on a foundation of thin muslin or leno, the top from five to six inches wide,

FASHIONS.

FASHION NOTES.

MANY of the newest woolen gowns are in most beautiful blendings of color, whether in wide stripes or large squares, the stripes being so wide that only two come in one breadth of the material, and it is not an easy task to arrange these stripes in the most becoming manner; they are generally made up with a plain material. In a gown of brown cloth and stone-colored striped silk, a length of striped silk starts from the left shoulder and is carried to the edge of the dress on the right; the silk on the bodice has the stripes running straight down and then crossing the bodice to the left of the waist; the silk is all in one piece and drapes the front of the skirt, all but the left side.

As a rule, the skirts of all costumes, indoor or out-door, are made plain but not scanty, and trimmed profusely with braiding and panels of different material; self-trimming braid or cord is, without doubt, the most serviceable. Now that so little dress-improver is worn, it requires great care to make the skirt hang quite evenly at the back; many skirts are being made with no drapery, only large plaits at the back, finished with a large sash. The number of steels that are used must depend on the material, if it is soft, two steels with a small pad, if the material is thick and heavy, one steel is sufficient.

Colored silk handkerchiefs are worn pushed into the front of the bodice of dresses instead of muslin or cambric ones.

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bon. Passementerie is also used on velvet, and the newest shapes are quite flat at the back. The embroidered cloths are in charming shades of dove-color, gray, and white, mixed with velvet of a darker shade. Black is introduced on almost all, either for the velvet ribbon trimming a felt bonnet, or the black may be introduced by two wings of birds, with a velvet brim, plaited at the top, drawn down its sides and forming short strings. A pretty bonnet of ruby velvet has a low crown and three deep plaits of velvet in front. A band of passementerie borders the crown, which is almost hidden by a large bow of black moiré ribbon, the bows pointing toward the front.

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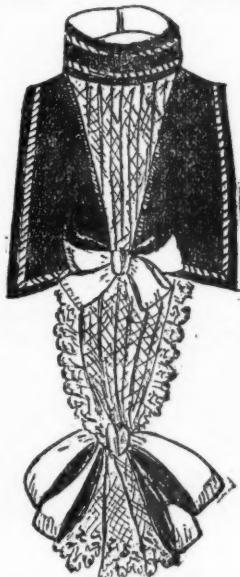


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The plastron of lace is made in one length on a foundation of thin muslin or leno, the top from five to six inches wide,

according to the width of the figure, and the velvet is laid on the plastron, and

and ribbon are much in request, or folded ribbon with fancy edges in soft, pale colors,



finished by a bow of ribbon which completes the square.

For ordinary wear, flat tuckers of lisso

the ends finished in little bows, as if tied when in the gown. Collars and cuffs of lace laid on colored ribbon, with the lace



set in fans at the end, are also fashionable. For less dressy occasions, the fans of lace are smaller, and the ribbon-bows very minute, or else omitted altogether.

Although fur muffs in bag and barrel form are much in favor, they have by no means eclipsed the dainty little confections which are made to match costumes and mantles. Our model, Fig. 3, is of self-colored cloth edged with fur, and completed by bows of silk and velvet.

Our second muff is intended for a costume of cloth trimmed with velvet, and is in bag form on a foundation of cloth. The centre has a strip of velvet, and pinked-out stripes of cloth are laid in folds round the edges, and finish in a high fan or rosette on the top of the muff.

Cords and pendant drops are arranged at the lower part of the muff, but these are by no means necessary. A pocket for the handkerchief may be arranged at the top, but the shape is retained more completely if this is omitted.

The model shown by our first figure (on page 203) is of embroidered white silk with violet velvet waist. It is exceedingly simple, and may be copied in cashmere for house wear.

The second is a very pretty gown, in which is shown the graceful fichu—or long, narrow shawl—worn loosely round the shoulders. A sash confines the waist.

The skirt of the gown, which is composed of rich satin *merveilleux*, is handsomely embroidered in colors. There is a little embroidered vest and collar, and a silk scarf with fringed ends carelessly knotted upon the breast.

WINTER FASHIONS FOR CHILDREN.

IT is not a difficult matter in these days to dress children prettily and sensibly, judging from the charming things to be seen at different stores. What can be more graceful, yet more comfortable for a child than the soft woolen materials in art shades, smocked and gathered on the shoulders, and falling in long folds, thus allowing plenty of room for the free use of arms and legs. For quite young children, white is preferred to colors. For girls of ten and twelve, a bright Chartreuse green looks well, made with black watered silk revers and sash. The long straight

coats in the Directoire style are being made for girls in their teens. A frock in warm terra-cotta cloth, in the Directoire style, has the two sides bordered with braid and beige-colored faille, full vest ending in a pointed waistband of velvet. Dresses made in the pinafore shape are very much liked, the top part may be made of Liberty silk, white or in a pale color contrasting with the rest of the dress, the yoke smocked, leaving an inch and a half of plain silk to form a frill round the neck, large sleeves smocked from the elbow to the wrist, leaving a plain piece again to form a frill. The pinafore is caught up on the left side to show a plush shirt, silk stockings and shoes of the same color as the plush. The smocking should be worked with silk the same color as the plush. The pinafore falls in straight folds; no sash. Serge frocks are most serviceable to everyday wear; a blue serge looks well with a red yoke, to which the rest of the bodice is gathered; sleeves full to the elbow; the rest plain to the wrist of red. A pinafore dress for any child under twelve may be easily made of muslin with a plain yoke; the rest of the pinafore should be plaited, allowing plenty of fullness, and then put into the yoke of double muslin. Broad hem at the bottom, showing an inch or two of the under-dress; wide sleeves gathered at the wrist into a plain band, frill of lace at the neck. The under-dress should be of pale-colored cashmere, made princess shape, with a frill at the bottom. Little boys' frocks are made with long jerseys with a full plait put on at the edge, and a sash fastened at the side or back in a large bow and ends. A pretty way of making a frock for a child of two in *réséda* cashmere is with a plain full skirt and overskirt carried up back and front in a narrow strip, forming part of a yoke with separate side pieces and tucked horizontally, sash of *vieux rose* faille at the back, sleeves cut on the cross, full and puffed at the tops. Silk ruche round the neck. The round shape is popular with pointed yokes, and some of the lighter cloths are made with broad box-plaits at the back lined with black or colored moiré; these are only fastened with a girdle round the waist. Those made in the double shape, with long straight fronts, look very pretty, the gathered back fastened with a pointed

band, the under one close-fitting, the outer loose and full, reaching to the edge of the dress. Very useful are the gaiters of cloth matching the coat, and fastened up the side with eight buttons. Hood lined with silk for tiny children, the pelisses of cream lamb's wool, trimmed with pompons or fleece, are most fascinating. Fur is used on both coats and hats, squirrel, chinchilla, white fox, lamb and Mongolia being the most suitable. The hoods for babies and little girls are of a kind of cashmere flannel in creamy white,

pinked frills round the front, or finished with a lace-and-ribbon cap. For older children, hats are of felt, velvet, and silk, with wide brims, worn rather at the back of the head, after the Directoire and Empire style. Small, close-fitting hats are being made of the cloth to match the coat or cloak. A charming hat to be worn rather at the back of the head, and wide brim over the face, is of dark-brown velvet, lined with fawn velvet, the brim edged with a thick ostrich ruche, large fawn-colored bow resting on the head.

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The poem "Home Calls," published in the January number, was copied from *Good Housekeeping*, and through some mistake was not credited to that journal.



THE GYPSY.

